









THE BOOK OF POETRY

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BRITISH POETS

PAGES 2551 TO 2816



# THE BOOK OF POETRY

Collected from the Whole Field  
of British and American Poetry.  
Also Translations of Important  
Poems from Foreign Languages.

Selected and Annotated  
with an Introduction by  
EDWIN MARKHAM

**WITHDRAWN**  
*Poetry fettered,  
fetters the human race.*  
—William Blake.

VOLUME IX

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BRITISH POETS

FROM 1861  
TO 1898



16600

## MARY COLERIDGE

ENGLAND, 1861—1907

MARY COLERIDGE, a distant relative of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, published no poetry under her own name. Her reticence in this respect recalls the reticence of Emily Dickinson. The first of the following poems seems in particular to come to us out of the air with no foothold in reality; but it creates a mood of wonder, that wild strangeness that is at the heart of the noblest poetry. You will put your own interpretation into it. It is worth while because it leaves an exalted sense of the mystery of life.

### *Unwelcome*

WE were young, we were merry, we were very  
    very wise,  
    And the door stood open at our feast;  
When there passed us a woman with the West in her  
    eyes,  
    And a man with his back to the East.

Oh, still grew the hearts that were beating so fast,  
    The loudest voice was still.  
The jest died away on our lips as they passed,  
    And the rays of July struck chill.

## MARY COLERIDGE

The cups of red wine turned pale on the board,  
The white bread black as soot.  
The hound forgot the hand of her lord,  
She fell down at his foot.

Low let me lie, where the dead dog lies,  
Ere I sit me down again at a feast;  
When there passes a woman with the West in her eyes,  
And a man with his back to the East.

### *A Moment*

THE clouds had made a crimson crown  
About the mountains high.  
The stormy sun was going down  
In a stormy sky.

Why did you let your eyes so rest on me,  
And hold your breath between?  
In all the ages this can never be  
As if it had not been.

### *Unpunished*

THE weapon that you fought with was a word,  
And with that word you stabbed me to the  
heart.  
Not once but twice you did it, yet the sword  
Made no blood start.

## MARY COLERIDGE

They have not tried you for your life. You go  
Strong in such innocence as men will boast.  
They have not buried me! they do not know  
Life from its ghost.

## MAURICE HEWLETT

ENGLAND, 1861—1923

**H**EWLETT has courted the Muse with quiet persistence since the appearance of his first book of poems, *Songs and Meditations* (1897); but his reputation rests upon his prose interpretations of the more recondite phases of the life and thought of the Middle Ages, especially in Italy. His great popular success was a beautiful romance entitled *The Forest Lovers*. His stories enchant me.

### *Flos Virginum*

**W**HERE is a holier thing  
In a fair world apparelled for our bliss  
Than the pure influence  
That dwells in a girl's heart  
And beams from her quiet eyes?  
Earth has no ministering  
So lovely, so acceptable or wise,  
Withal so frail as this;  
Which, if man win, it needeth all his art,  
Lest uncouth violence,  
Rough mastery, or the tyrannies of earth,  
Should maim or shatter out  
With ill-timed speech or flout  
Her wistful-tendered balm at very birth.

## MAURICE HEWLETT

Her Motherhood to be  
She hides in her child-bosom, as a seed  
That creepeth to be flower  
Long ere it feeleth light:  
She nurtureth her lover.  
Within her arms made free,  
Upon her heart made restful, given over  
To her most gentle deed,  
He lieth watched upon by her grave sight;  
And she liveth her hour,  
Contented to be Mother to this child,  
Given before her time  
Assurance whence to climb  
Up to her real throne of Godhead mild. . . .

\*     \*     \*     \*     \*

Ah, frailer than a breath,  
Sullied sooner, more fatally than glass!  
If such most desolate  
Pitiful lot be hers,  
That a brute-soul possess  
And goad her to her death;  
Death were more welcome than the piteousness  
Of life, for she would pass  
Up to the stars, the silent messengers  
Of God who from his seat  
Weepeth for beauty driven down by dearth  
Of love to peak and fail,  
To wring hands and turn pale,  
Eyeing dismayed the shock of her soul's worth.

*Night-Errantry*

THREE long breaths of the blessed night  
And I am fast asleep;  
No need to read by candle-light  
Or count a flock of sheep.

Deep, deep I lie as any dead,  
Save my breath comes and goes;  
The holy dark is like a bed  
With violet curtains close.

And while enfolded I lie there  
Until the dawn of day,  
My body is the prisoner,  
My soul slips out to play.

A-tiltœ on the window-sill  
He listens like a mouse,  
The calling wind blows from the hill  
And circles round the house.

Above the voices of the town  
It whispers in the tree,  
And brings the message of the Down:  
'Tis there my soul would be.

Then while enchain'd my body lies  
Like a dead man in grave,  
Thither on trackless feet he hies,  
On wings that make no wave.

The dawn comes out in cold gray sark  
And finds him flitting there

## MAURICE HEWLETT

Among the creatures of the dark,  
Vixen and brock and hare.

O wild white face that's none of mine,  
O eager eyes unknown,  
What will you do with Prosperine,  
And what shall I, alone?

O flying feet, O naked sides,  
O tresses flowing free,  
And are you his that all day bides  
So soberly in me?

The sun streams up behind the hill  
And strikes the window-pane:  
The empty land lies hot and still,  
And I am I again.

## KATHARINE TYNAN IRELAND, 1861—

### *The Call*

THE unforgotten voices call at twilight,  
In the gray dawning, in the quiet night hours:  
Voices of mountains and of waters falling,  
Voices of wood-doves in the tender valleys,  
Voices of flowery meadows, golden corn-fields—  
Yea, all the lonely bog-lands have their voices.  
Voices of church-bells over the green country,  
Memories of home, of youth. O unforgotten!  
When all the world's asleep the voices call me,  
*Come home, acushla, home!* Why did you leave us?

## KATHARINE TYNAN

The little voices hurt my heart to weeping;  
There are small fingers plucking at my heartstrings.

Let me alone, be still, I will not hear you!  
Why would I come to find the old places lonely?  
They are all gone, the loving, the true-hearted;  
Beautiful country of the dead, I come not.  
Why would I meet the cold eyes of the stranger?  
All the nests of my heart are cold and empty.

I will not come for all your soft compelling,  
Little fingers plucking me by the heart-strings,  
In the gray dawning, in the quiet night hours.  
Because the dead, the darling dead, return not,  
And all the nests of my heart are cold and lonely.  
*They will not give me peace at dawn and twilight.*

### *The Desire*

**G**IVE me no mansions ivory white,  
Nor palaces of pearl and gold;  
Give me a child for all delight,  
Just four years old.

Give me no wings of rosy shine  
Nor snowy raiment, fold on fold:  
Give me a little boy all mine,  
Just four years old.

Give me no gold and starry crown,  
Nor harps, nor palm branches unrolled:  
Give me a nestling head of brown,  
Just four years old.

## KATHARINE TYNAN

Give me a cheek that's like the peach,  
Two arms to clasp me from the cold;  
And all my heaven's within my reach,  
    Just four years old.

Dear God, You give me from Your skies  
A little paradise to hold,  
As Mary once her Paradise,  
    Just four years old.

### *All-Souls*

THE door of Heaven is on the latch  
    To-night, and many a one is fain  
To go home for one's night's watch  
    With his love again.

Oh, where the father and mother sit  
    There's a drift of dead leaves at the door,  
Like pitter-patter of little feet  
    That come no more.

Their thoughts are in the night and cold,  
    Their tears are heavier than the clay;  
But who is this at the threshold  
    So young and gay?

They are come from the land o' the young,  
    They have forgotten how to weep;  
Words of comfort on the tongue,  
    And a kiss to keep.

They sit down and they stay awhile,  
Kisses and comfort none shall lack:  
At morn they steal forth with a smile  
And a long look back.

*From "The Making of Birds"*

**G**OD made Him birds in a pleasant humor;  
Tired of planets and suns was He.  
He said, "I will add a glory to summer,  
Gifts for my creatures banished from Me!"

He had a thought and it set Him smiling,  
Of the shape of a bird and its glancing head,  
Its dainty air and its grace beguiling:  
"I will make feathers," the Lord God said.

He made the robin, He made the swallow,  
His deft hands molding the shape to His mood;  
The thrush, the lark, and the finch to follow,  
And laughed to see that His work was good.

He who has given men gift of laughter,  
Made in His image; He fashioned fit  
The blink of the owl and the stork thereafter,  
The little wren and the long-tailed tit.

He spent in the making His wit and fancies;  
The wing-feathers He fashioned them strong;  
Deft and dear as daisies and pansies,  
He crowned His work with the gift of song.

JOHN OXENHAM  
ENGLAND, 20TH CENTURY

**O**XENHAM took to writing as an alternative to business, found it more congenial, dropped business and became a novelist and poet, with some thirty novels and eight volumes of verse to his credit.

*The Sacrament of Fire*

**K**NEEL always when you light a fire!  
Kneel reverently, and thankful be  
For God's unfailing charity,  
And on the ascending flame inspire  
A little prayer, which shall upbear  
The incense of your thankfulness  
For this sweet grace  
Of warmth and light!  
For here again is sacrifice  
For your delight.

Within the wood,  
That lived a joyous life  
Through sunny days and rainy days  
And winter storms and strife—  
Within the peat,  
That drank the sweet,  
The moorland sweet  
Of bracken, whin, and sweet bell-heather,  
And knew the joy of gold gorse feather  
Flaming like Love in wintriest weather;

While snug below, in sun and snow  
It heard the beat of the padding feet  
Of foal and dam and ewe and lamb,  
And the stamp of old bell-wether—  
Within the coal,  
Where forests lie entombed—  
Oak, elm, and chestnut, beech, and red pine bole.  
God shrined His sunshine, and enwombed  
For you these stores of light and heat,  
Your life-joys to complete.  
These all have died that you might live:  
Yours now the high prerogative  
To loose their long captivities,  
And through these new activities  
A wider life to give.  
Kneel always when you light a fire!  
Kneel reverently,  
And grateful be  
For God's unfailing charity!

NORMAN GALE  
ENGLAND, 1862—

*Dawn and Dark*

**G**OD with His million cares  
Went to the left or right,  
Leaving our world; and the day  
Grew night.

Back from a sphere He came  
Over a starry lawn,  
Looked at our world; and the dark  
Grew dawn.

*A Creed*

**G**OD sends no message by me. I am mute  
When Wisdom crouches in her farthest cave:  
I love the organ, but must touch the lute. . . .

No controversies thrust me to the ledge  
Of dangerous schools and doctrines hard to learn:  
Give me the whitethroat whistling in the hedge.

Why should I fret myself to find out nought?  
Dispute can blight the soul's eternal corn  
And choke its richness with the tares of thought.

## NORMAN GALE

I am content to know that God is great,  
And Lord of fish and fowl, of air and sea—  
Some little points are misty. Let them wait. . . .

## EDEN PHILLPOTTS

ENGLAND, 1862—

IN addition to a long list of novels, this English man of letters, born in India, is the author of several volumes of verse, among them *The Iscariot*, *Plain Song*, *As the Wind Blows* and *Cherry Stones*. There is power and biting humor in many of his epigrams in verse. They should be more widely known.

### *The Puddle*

I CURSED the puddle when I found  
Unseeing I had walked therein,  
Forgetting the uneven ground,  
Because my eyes  
Were on the skies,  
To glean their glory and to win  
The sunset's trembling ecstasies.

And then I marked the puddle's face,  
When still and quiet grown again,  
Was but concerned, as I, to trace  
The wonder spread  
Above its head,  
And mark and mirror and contain  
The gold and purple, rose and red.

*Feline Anyway*

**L**IFE'S a cat with nine sharp tails:"  
Loud laments the man who fails.  
"Life's a cat with nine good lives,"  
Answers him the man who thrives.  
Good or ill their fate may be,  
Life's a cat, they both agree;  
Let what fortune haunt the house,  
Life's a cat and man's a mouse.

*The Wasp*

**A** SEVERED wasp yet drank the juice  
Of a ripe pear upon a plate,  
And one did idly meditate  
What was the use.

Yet round about us, spent and done,  
With hands already growing cold,  
We see half-men still scraping gold,  
Its uses gone.

*Two Funerals*

**W**HEN we buried old Bill at the church far away:  
'Cause he wanted to rise with his wife, the Last  
Day,  
Our hearse, going fast on the moor in the rain,  
Ran over a rabbit—the creature was slain.  
Old Bill had a funeral worth all the money:  
Two carrion crows cawed the service for bunny.

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON  
ENGLAND, 1863—1911

*Requiescat*

**B**URY me deep when I am dead,  
Far from the woods where sweet birds sing:  
Lap me in sullen stone and lead,  
Lest my poor dust should feel the Spring.

Never a flower be near me set,  
Nor starry cup nor slender stem,  
Anemone nor violet,  
Lest my poor dust remember them.

And you—wherever you may fare—  
Dearer than birds, or flowers, or dew—  
Never, ah me, pass never there,  
Lest my poor dust should dream of you.

VICTOR PLARR

ENGLAND, 1863—

PLARR is another poet whose fame rests mainly upon one poem, the accompanying epitaph taken from his volume, *In the Dorian Mood*. Since 1890 he has been successively librarian of King's College, London, and of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

*Epitaphium Citharistriæ*

STAND not uttering sedately  
Trite oblivious praise above her!  
Rather say you saw her lately  
Lightly kissing her last lover.

Whisper not “There is a reason  
Why we bring her no white blossom:”  
Since the snowy bloom’s in season,  
Strow it on her sleeping bosom:

Oh, for it would be a pity  
To o’erpraise her or to flout her:  
She was wild, and sweet, and witty—  
Let’s not say dull things about her.

SIR ARTHUR T. QUILLER-COUCH  
ENGLAND, 1863—

PROFESSOR of English Literature at Cambridge University since 1912, Quiller-Couch is better known for his prose than for his poetry. His books of verse include *The Splendid Spur*; *Verses and Parodies*; *Poems and Ballads* (1896). He edited *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, *The Oxford Book of Ballads* and *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*.

*Saturn*

FROM my farm, from her farm  
Furtively we came. . . .  
In either home a hearth was warm:  
We nursed a hungrier flame.

Our feet were foul with mire,  
Our faces blind with mist;  
But all the night was naked fire  
About us where we kissed.

To her farm, to my farm,  
Loathing we returned:  
Pale beneath a gallows arm  
The planet Saturn burned.

*The Splendid Spur*

NOT on the neck of prince or hound,  
Nor on a woman's finger twined,  
May gold from the deriding ground  
Keep sacred that we sacred bind:  
Only the heel  
Of splendid steel  
Shall stand secure on sliding fate,  
When golden navies weep their freight.

The scarlet hat, the laureled stave  
Are measures, not the springs, of worth:  
In a wife's lap, as in a grave,  
Man's airy notions mix with earth.  
Seek other spur  
Bravely to stir  
The dust in this loud world, and tread  
Alp-high among the whispering dead.

*Trust in thyself*—then spur amain:  
So shall Charybdis wear a grace,  
Grim Ætna laugh, the Libyan plain  
Take roses to her shriveled face.  
This orb—this round  
Of sight and sound—  
Count it the lists that God hath built  
For haughty hearts to ride a-tilt.

## LAURENCE HOPE

ENGLAND, 1865—1904

WITH the appearance, in 1902, of *India's Love Lyrics* a new and authentic singer found a definite place in the English choir. Its author, who signed herself Laurence Hope, was long thought to be a man. Gradually it became known that the poet was Adela Nicolson, a native of Gloucestershire, and wife of General Malcolm Nicolson, of the Indian Army, stationed at Madras, India. There she committed suicide.

### *Ashore*

BUT I came from the dancing place,  
The night-wind met me face to face—

A wind off the harbor, cold and keen,  
“I know,” it whistled, “where thou hast been.”

A faint voice fell from the stars above—  
“Thou? whom we lighted to shrines of Love!”

I found when I reached my lonely room  
A faint sweet scent in the unlit gloom.

And this was the worst of all to bear,  
For some one had left white lilac there.

The flower you loved, in times that were.

*Sea Song*

**A** GAINST the planks of the cabin side,  
 (So slight a thing between them and me)  
 The great waves thundered and throbbed and sighed,  
 The great green waves of the Indian sea!

Your face was white as the foam is white,  
 Your hair was curled as the waves are curled,  
 I would we had steamed and reached that night  
 The sea's last edge, the end of the world.

The wind blew in through the open port,  
 So freshly joyous and salt and free,  
 Your hair it lifted, your lips it sought,  
 And then swept back to the open sea.

The engines throbbed with their constant beat;  
 Your heart was nearer, and all I heard;  
 Your lips were salt, but I found them sweet,  
 While, acquiescent, you spoke no word.

So straight you lay in your narrow berth,  
 Rocked by the waves; and you seemed to be  
 Essence of all that is sweet on earth,  
 Of all that is sad and strange at sea.

And you were white as the foam is white,  
 Your hair was curled as the waves are curled.  
 Ah! had we but sailed and reached that night  
 The sea's last edge, the end of the world!

*Request*

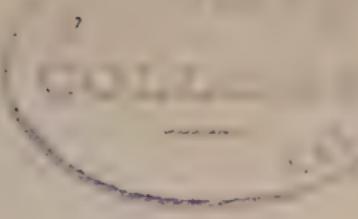
**G**IVE me yourself one hour; I do not crave  
For any love, or even thought, of me.  
Come as a Sultan may caress a slave  
And then forget forever, utterly.

Come! as west winds, that passing, cool and wet,  
O'er desert places, leave them fields in flower,  
And all my life (for I shall not forget),  
Will keep the fragrance of that perfect hour!

HERBERT TRENCH  
IRELAND, 1865—1923

*O Dreamy, Gloom, Friendly Trees*

O DREAMY, gloomy, friendly trees,  
I came along your narrow track  
To bring my gifts unto your knees  
And gifts did you give back;  
For when I brought this heart that burns—  
These thoughts that bitterly repine—  
And laid them here among the ferns  
And the hum of boughs divine,  
Ye, vastest breathers of the air,  
Shook down with slow and mighty poise  
Your coolness on the human care,  
Your wonder on its toys,  
Your greenness on the heart's despair,  
Your darkness on its noise.



## ARTHUR SYMONS

ENGLAND, 1865—

IF we turn to his poems and critical papers, we will find them pervaded with a light air of cynicism, mixed with wafts of intellectual romanticism. His *Spiritual Adventures*, a volume of stories, has caught the attention of the discriminating. In his critical essays, Symons has rendered a distinguished service to the cause of song. His *Symbolic Movement in Literature* lifts the curtain on a poetic activity that has profoundly influenced the course of French letters. But his fine volume, *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry*, is more extended in its scope: it should be in the hand of every student of the spacious Age of Wordsworth.

### *Amends to Nature*

I HAVE loved colors, and not flowers;  
Their motion, not the swallow's wings;  
And wasted more than half my hours  
Without the comradeship of things.

How is it, now, that I can see,  
With love and wonder and delight,  
The children of the hedge and tree,  
The little lords of day and night?

How is it that I see the roads,  
No longer with usurping eyes,  
A twilight meeting-place for toads,  
A mid-day mart for butterflies?

## ARTHUR SYMONS

I feel, in every midge that hums,  
Life, fugitive and infinite,  
And suddenly the world becomes  
A part of me and I of it.

### *The Return*

**A** LITTLE hand is knocking at my heart,  
And I have closed the door.  
"I pray thee, for the love of God, depart:  
Thou shalt come in no more."

"Open, for I am weary of the way.  
The night is very black.  
I have been wandering many a night and day.  
Open. I have come back."

The little hand is knocking patiently;  
I listen, dumb with pain.  
"Wilt thou not open, any more to me?  
I have come back again."

"I will not open any more. Depart.  
I, that once lived, am dead."  
The hand that had been knocking at my heart  
Was still. "And I?" she said.

There is no sound, save in the winter air,  
The sound of wind and rain.  
All that I loved in all the world stands there,  
And will not knock again.

*Wanderer's Song*

**I** HAVE had enough of women, and enough of love,  
 But the land waits, and the sea waits, and day and  
 night is enough:  
 Give me a long white road, and the grey wide path of  
 the sea,  
 And the wind's will and the bird's will, and the heart-  
 ache still in me.

Why should I seek out sorrow, and give gold for strife?  
 I have loved much and wept much, but tears and love  
 are not life:  
 The grass calls to my heart, and the foam to my blood  
 cries up,  
 And the sun shines and the road shines, and the wine's  
 in the cup.

I have had enough of wisdom, and enough of mirth,  
 For the way's one and the end's one, and it's soon to the  
 ends of the earth;  
 And it's then good-night and to bed, and if heels or  
 heart ache,  
 Well, it's sound sleep and long sleep, and sleep too deep  
 to wake.

*Asking Forgiveness*

**I** DID not know; child, child, I did not know,  
 Who now in lonely wayfare go,  
 Who wander lonely of you, O my child,  
 And by myself exiled.  
 I did not know, but, O white soul of youth,  
 So passionate of truth,

## ARTHUR SYMONS

So amorous of duty, and so strong  
To suffer, all but wrong,  
Is there for me no pity, who am weak?  
Spare me this silence, speak!  
I did not know: I wronged you. I repent:  
But will you not relent?  
Must I still wander, outlawed, and go on  
The old weary ways alone,  
As in the old, intolerable days  
Before I saw your face,  
The doubly darkened ways since you withdraw  
Your light, that was my law?  
I charge you by your soul, pause, ere you hurl  
Sheer to destruction, girl,  
A poor soul that had midway struggled out,  
Still midway clogged about,  
And for the love of you had turned his back  
Upon the miry track,  
That had been as a grassy wood-way, dim  
With violet-beds, to him.  
I wronged you, but I loved you; and to me  
Your love was purity:  
I rose, because you called me, and I drew  
Nearer to God, in you.  
I fall, and if you leave me, I must fall  
To that last depth of all,  
Where not the miracle of even your eyes  
Can bid the dead arise.  
I charge you that you save not your own sense  
Of lilied innocence,  
By setting, at the roots of that fair stem,  
A murdered thing to nourish them.

## WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

IRELAND, 1865—

YEATS is a romanticist—so is Kipling in another fashion, for he has lifted the grim realism of the work-a-day world into the realm of the imagination. But Yeats's romantic domain is far different: he explores the Celtic Eld.

Coleridge, Scott and Morris—each in his own way—touched the mystic and the traditional, but never in the manner of the Celtic Revival, headed by Yeats—a movement that includes Padraic Colum, Lionel Johnson, Moira O'Neill, Katharine Tynan, A. E. (George W. Russell).

He published, at nineteen, his first poem, *The Island of Statues*, a drama of magic and enchantment. He passed under the influence of the ancient Celtic mythology and literature, seizing upon their interior realities. In the ancient heroes, he found "forms more real than living man." The Gaelic bards had music and vision, yet they lacked the power to give life to these shapes moving in the ancient mist. But the genius of Yeats seemed to breathe into these forms the breath of life, to project into them the deeper rhythms of living men.

We find in his dramatic writings a singular love of fantasy, coupled with a certain power over concrete expression. But most of his shorter poems are obscured by mystic vapors. Taken in their totality, his writings are pervaded by "Irish glamor, a deep mysticism, a dream-like imagination, an alluring beauty."

His complete works are now available in six volumes. He received the Nobel Prize in 1923. It is significant that on the formation of the Irish Free State he became a Senator.

*An Old Song Resung*

DOWN by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;  
 She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.  
 She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;  
 But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand.  
 And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.  
 She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;  
 But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

*The Song of Wandering Engus*

I WENT out to the hazel wood  
 Because a fire was in my head,  
 And cut and peeled a hazel wand,  
 And hooked a berry to a thread;  
 And when white moths were on the wing,  
 And moth-like stars were flickering out,  
 I dropped the berry in a stream,  
 And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor,  
 I went to blow the fire a-flame.  
 But something rustled on the floor,  
 And some one called me by my name:  
 It had become a glimmering girl,

# WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

With apple-blossom in her hair,  
Who called me by my name and ran  
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering  
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,  
I will find out where she has gone,  
And kiss her lips and take her hands;  
And walk among long dappled grass,  
And pluck till time and times are done  
The silver apples of the moon,  
The golden apples of the sun.

## *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles  
made:  
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey  
bee,  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.  
  
And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes  
dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the  
cricket sings:  
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.  
  
I will arise and go now, for always, night and day,  
I hear lake-water lapping with low sounds by the  
shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

*When You Are Old*

WHEN you are old and gray and full of sleep,  
 And nodding by the fire, take down this book,  
 And slowly read and dream of the soft look  
 Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,  
 And loved your beauty with love false or true;  
 But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,  
 And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars  
 Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled  
 And paced upon the mountains overhead  
 And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

*The Cap and Bells*

A JESTER walked in the garden;  
 The garden had fallen still;  
 He bade his soul rise upward  
 And stand at her window-sill.

It rose in a straight blue garment,  
 When owls began to call:  
 It had grown wise-tongued by thinking  
 Of a quiet and light foot-fall;

But the young queen would not listen;  
 She rose in her pale night gown;  
 She drew in the heavy casement  
 And pushed the latches down.

## WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

He bade his heart go to her,  
When the owls called out no more:  
In a red and quivering garment  
It sang to her through the door.

It had grown sweet-tongued by dreaming  
Of a flutter of flower-like hair;  
But she took up her fan from the table  
And waved it off on the air.

“I have cap and bells,” he pondered,  
“I will send them to her and die”;  
And when the morning whitened  
He left them where she went by.

She laid them upon her bosom,  
Under a cloud of her hair;  
And her red lips sang them a love-song,  
Till stars grew out of the air.

She opened her door and her window,  
And the heart and the soul came through:  
To her right hand came the red one,  
To her left hand came the blue.

They set up a noise like crickets,  
A chattering wise and sweet;  
And her hair was a folded flower,  
And the quiet of love in her feet.

*The Old Men Admiring Themselves in the Water*

I HEARD the old, old men say,  
"Everything alters,  
And one by one we drop away."  
They had hands like claws, and their knees  
Were twisted like the old thorn trees  
By the waters.  
I heard the old, old men say,  
"All that's beautiful drifts away  
Like the waters."

## RUDYARD KIPLING

ENGLAND, 1865—

BORN in India, Kipling rose into fame while making his home in America and in England. He has a robust and vivid pen. He has packed many a didactic idea into a melodious and portable shape. At times his poems sink into newspaper slang. *The Barrack-Room Ballads* (first published in America, 1891) are woven out of the sweepings of the street. Nothing seems too common and tawdry for the electric-touch of his genius. He turns life's refuse into haunting rhymes and rhythms. We are swept on in the storm of sound and sentiment and wild humor. Who can forget Gunga Din, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, Danny Deever, Tommy and the rest of the ballad heroes? *Mandalay* set the world to marking time, with rememberable lines:

“By the old Moulmein pagoda, lookin’ eastward to the sea,  
There’s a Burma girl a-sittin’, and I know she thinks o’ me;  
For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple-bells  
they say:

‘Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to  
Mandalay!’

Come you back to Mandalay,

Where the old Flotilla lay:

Can’t you ‘ear their paddles chunkin’ from Rangoon to  
Mandalay?

On the road to Mandalay,

Where the flyin’-fishes play,

And the dawn comes up like thunder outer China  
‘crost the Bay!’”

Memorable also is the *Ballad of the Bolivar*, the storm-tossed ship,

“Trailing like a wounded duck, working out her soul;  
Clanging like a smithy shop after every roll;  
Just a funnel and a mast lurching through the spray—  
So we threshed the Bolivar, out across the Bay!”

## RUDYARD KIPLING

And here are the opening lines of *Tomlinson*, a poem never to be overlooked by a student searching into Kipling's thought and art. Tomlinson was that sort of half-man whose life is second-hand, and whose opinions are mere quotations:

"Now Tomlinson gave up the ghost in his house in Berkeley Square,  
And a Spirit came to his bedside and gripped him by the hair—  
A Spirit gripped him by the hair and carried him far away,  
Till he heard as the roar of a rain-fed ford the roar of the Milky Way:  
Till he heard the roar of the Milky Way die down and drone and cease,  
And they came to the Gate within the Wall where Peter holds the keys.  
'Stand up, stand up now, Tomlinson, and answer loud and high  
The good that ye did for the sake of men or ever ye came to die—  
The good that ye did for the sake of men in little earth so lone!'  
And the naked soul of Tomlinson grew white as a rain-washed bone.

\* \* \* \* \*

"'O this I have read in a book,' he said, 'and that was told to me,  
And this I have thought that another man thought of a Prince in Muscovy.'  
The good souls flocked like homing doves, and bade him clear the path,  
And Peter twirled the jangling keys in weariness and wrath.  
'Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought,' he said,  
'and the tale is yet to run:  
By the worth of the body that once ye had, give answer—  
what ha' ye done?'"

Louis Untermeyer, in his *Modern British Poetry*, squeezes Kipling into this brevity: "This gifted and prolific creator, whose work was affected by the War, has frequently lapsed into bombast and a journalistic imperialism. At his best he is unforgettable, standing mountain-high above his host of imitators."

Yes, at his best and in his higher moods, his work is pervaded with the beam of the sun, the tang of the sea, the fragrance of the earth. In such a poem as *The Last Chanty*, Kipling rises to the summit of his powers.

His poems are collected in a one-volume *Inclusive Edition*. In 1907, he won the Nobel Prize.

### *A Dedication*

**M**Y new-cut ashlar takes the light  
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.  
By my own work before the night,  
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

If there be good in that I wrought  
Thy Hand compelled it, Master, Thine—  
Where I have failed to meet Thy Thought  
I know, through Thee, the blame was mine.

The depth and dream of my desire,  
The bitter paths wherein I stray—  
Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,  
Thou Knowest Who hast made the Clay.

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,  
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain—  
Godlike to muse o'er his own trade  
And manlike stand with God again!

One stone the more swings into place  
 In that dread Temple of Thy worth.  
 It is enough that, through Thy Grace,  
 I saw naught common on Thy Earth.

Take not that vision from my ken—  
 Oh whatsoe'er may spoil or speed.  
 Help me to need no aid from men  
 That I may help such men as need!

*The Vampire*

SUGGESTED BY THE PAINTING BY PHILIP BURNE-JONES

**A** FOOL there was and he made his prayer  
 (Even as you and I!)  
 To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair  
 (We called her the woman who did not care)  
 But the fool he called her his lady fair  
 (Even as you and I!)

*Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste,  
 And the work of our head and hand,  
 Belong to the woman who did not know  
 (And now we know that she never could know)  
 And did not understand.*

A fool there was and his goods he spent  
 (Even as you and I!)  
 Honor and faith and a sure intent  
 (And it wasn't the least what the lady meant)  
 But a fool must follow his natural bent  
 (Even as you and I!)

# RUDYARD KIPLING

*Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost,  
And the excellent things we planned,  
Belong to the woman who didn't know why  
(And now we know she never knew why)  
And did not understand.*

*The fool was stripped to his foolish hide  
(Even as you and I!)*

*Which she might have seen when she threw him aside—  
(But it isn't on record the lady tried)  
So some of him lived but the most of him died—  
(Even as you and I!)*

*And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame  
That stings like a white-hot brand.  
It's coming to know that she never knew why  
(Seeing at last she could never know why)  
And never could understand.*

## *If—*

**I**f you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

## RUDYARD KIPLING

And treat those two impostors just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
    Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
    And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
    And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
    And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
    To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
    Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
    Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch;  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
    If all men count with you, but none too much;  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
    With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
    And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

*The Conundrum of the Workshops*

WHEN the flush of a newborn sun fell first on  
Eden's green and gold,  
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and scratched with  
a stick in the mold;  
And the first rude sketch that the world had seen was  
joy to his mighty heart,  
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves: "It's pretty,  
but is it Art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife and fled to fashion his  
work anew—  
The first of his race who cared a fig for the first, most  
dread review;  
And he left his lore to the use of his sons—and that was  
a glorious gain  
When the Devil chuckled: "Is it Art?" in the ear of the  
branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and wrench  
the stars apart,  
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks: "It's striking,  
but is it Art?"  
The stone was dropped by the quarry-side, and the idle  
derrick swung,  
While each man talked of the aims of art, and each in  
an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the north and the south,  
they talked and they fought in the west,  
Till the waters rose on the jabbering land, and the poor  
Red Clay had rest—

## RUDYARD KIPLING

Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn when the  
dove was preened to start,  
And the Devil bubbled below the keel: "It's human, but  
is it Art?"

The tale is old as the Eden Tree—as new as the new-  
cut tooth—  
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is  
master of Art and Truth;  
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the beat of  
his dying heart,  
The Devil drum on the darkened pane: "You did it,  
but was it Art?"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to the shape  
of a surplice-peg,  
We have learned to bottle our parents twain in the yolk  
of an addled egg,  
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as the horse  
is drawn by the cart;  
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old: "It's  
clever, but is it Art?"

When the flicker of London's sun falls faint on the club-  
room's green and gold,  
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch with their  
pens in the mold—  
They scratch with their pens in the mold of their graves,  
and the ink and the anguish start  
When the Devil mutters behind the leaves: "It's  
pretty, but is it Art?"

## RUDYARD KIPLING

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where the four  
great rivers flow,  
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as she left it  
long ago,  
And if we could come when the sentry slept, and softly  
scurry through,  
By the favor of God we might know as much—as our  
father Adam knew.

### *The Last Chantey*

*"And there was no more sea."* [Revelation 21:1.]

**T**HUS said the Lord in the Vault above the Cherubim,  
Calling to the angels and the souls in their degree:  
"Lo! Earth has passed away  
On the smoke of Judgment Day.  
That Our word may be established shall We gather up  
the sea?"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners:  
"Plague upon the hurricane that made us furl and flee!  
But the war is done between us,  
In the deep the Lord hath seen us—  
Our bones we'll leave the barracout',<sup>1</sup> and God may sink  
the sea!"

Then said the soul of Judas that betrayèd Him:  
"Lord, hast Thou forgotten Thy covenant with me?"

<sup>1</sup> *barracout'*. Barracouta, for barracuda, a large fish.

## RUDYARD KIPLING

How once a year I go  
To cool me on the floe,  
And Ye take my day of mercy if Ye take away the sea!"

Then said the soul of the Angel of the Off-shore Wind:  
(He that bits the thunder when the bull-mouthed  
breakers flee)

"I have watch and ward to keep  
O'er Thy wonders on the deep,  
And Ye take mine honor from me if Ye take away the  
sea!"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners:  
"Nay, but we were angry, and a hasty folk are we!  
If we worked the ship together  
Till she foundered in foul weather,  
Are we babes that we should clamor for a vengeance  
on the sea?"

Then said the souls of the slaves that men threw over-  
board:  
"Kenneled in the picaroon<sup>1</sup> a weary band were we;  
But Thy arm was strong to save,  
And it touched us on the wave,  
And we drowsed the long tides idle till Thy Trumpets  
tore the sea."

Then cried the soul of the stout Apostle Paul to God:  
"Once we frapped<sup>2</sup> a ship, and she labored woundily.<sup>3</sup>  
There were fourteen score of these,  
And they blessed Thee on their knees,

<sup>1</sup> *picaroon*. Pirate-ship.

<sup>2</sup> *frapped*. Lashed, girded (see *Acts 27: 17*).

<sup>3</sup> *woundily*. Excessively.

RUDYARD KIPLING

When they learned Thy Grace and Glory *under Malta*  
by the sea."

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,  
Plucking at their harps, and they plucked unhandily:  
"Our thumbs are rough and tarred,  
And the tune is something hard—  
May we lift a Deepsea Chantey<sup>1</sup> such as seamen use  
at sea?"

Then said the souls of the gentlemen-adventurers—  
Fettered wrist to bar all for red iniquity:  
"Ho, we revel in our chains  
O'er the sorrow that was Spain's;  
Heave or sink it, leave or drink it, we were masters of  
the sea!"

Up spake the soul of a gray Gothavn 'speckshioner<sup>2</sup>—  
(He that led the flinching<sup>3</sup> in the fleets of fair Dundee):  
"Ho, the ringer and right whale,  
And the fish we struck for sale,  
Will Ye whelm them all for wantonness that wallow in  
the sea?"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,  
Crying: "Under Heaven, here is neither lead nor lea!  
Must we sing for evermore  
On the windless, glassy floor?  
Take back your golden fiddles and we'll beat to open  
sea!"

<sup>1</sup> Deepsea Chantey. Pronounced "Dipsy Shanty."

<sup>2</sup> 'speckshioner. Chief harpooner of a whaler.

<sup>3</sup> flinching. Cutting of whale-blubber.

# RUDYARD KIPLING

Then stooped the Lord, and He called the good sea up to  
Him,  
And 'stablishèd his borders unto all eternity,  
That such as have no pleasure  
For to praise the Lord by measure,<sup>1</sup>  
They may enter into galleons and serve Him on the sea.

Sun, wind and cloud shall fail not from the face of it,  
Stinging, ringing spindrift, nor the fulmar<sup>2</sup> flying free;  
And the ships shall go abroad  
To the glory of the Lord  
Who heard the silly<sup>3</sup> sailor-folk and gave them back  
their sea!

## *Recessional*

**G**OD of our fathers, known of old—  
Lord of our far-flung battle-line—  
Beneath whose awful hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—  
The captains and the kings depart—  
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

<sup>1</sup> *by measure.* In song.

<sup>2</sup> *fulmar.* Petrel.

<sup>3</sup> *silly.* Poor.

## RUDYARD KIPLING

Far-called our navies melt away—  
On dune and headland sinks the fire—  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!  
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose  
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—  
Such boasting as the Gentiles use  
Or lesser breeds without the Law—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
In reeking tube and iron shard—  
All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—  
For frantic boast and foolish word,  
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!  
Amen.

*When Earth's Last Picture Is Painted*

*This poem has become a universal favorite, on account of its sweeping assertion of the individual's right to self-development.*

WHEN Earth's last picture is painted, and the tubes are twisted and dried,  
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died,  
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down for an eon or two,  
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall set us to work anew!

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden chair;  
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair;  
They shall find real saints to draw from—Magdalene, Peter and Paul;  
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;  
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;  
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,  
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER  
IRELAND, 1866—1919

*Ireland*

**T**WAS the dream of a God,  
And the mold of His hand,  
That you shook 'neath this stroke,  
That you trembled and broke  
To this beautiful land.

Here He loosed from His hold  
A brown tumult of wings,  
Till the wind on the sea  
Bore the strange melody  
Of an island that sings.

He made you all fair,  
You in purple and gold.  
You in silver and green,  
Till no eye that has seen  
Without love can behold.

I have left you behind  
In the path of the past,  
With the white breath of flowers,  
With the best of God's hours,  
I have left you at last.

*The Comforters*

WHEN I crept over the hill, broken with tears,  
When I crouched down in the grass, dumb in  
despair,  
I heard the soft croon of the wind bend to my ears,  
I felt the light kiss of the wind touching my hair.

When I stood lone on the height, my sorrow did speak,  
As I went down the hill, I cried and I cried,  
The soft little hands of the rain stroking my cheek,  
The kind little feet of the rain ran by my side.

When I went to thy grave, broken with tears,  
When I crouched down in the grass, dumb in despair,  
I heard the sweet croon of the wind soft in my ears,  
I felt the kind lips of the wind touching my hair.

When I stood lone by thy cross, sorrow did speak,  
When I went down the long hill, I cried and I cried,  
The soft little hands of the rain stroked my pale cheek,  
The kind little feet of the rain ran by my side.

## RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

ENGLAND, 1866—

LE GALLIENNE is remarkable in both his prose and verse. His long residence in America makes us want to claim him as "one of ours"; for it is in America that he has risen to his higher levels of song. His work has grown steadily richer with the years; and it affords me now "the noble pleasure of praising." He is a lyric son of Keats, but how great is the son! His volume, *The Junkman and Other Poems*, contains the most notable series of ballads ever written in America. In his preceding volume, *The Lonely Dancer*, we find poems winged with a bewitching music: they transport us to the mysterious shores and the haunted hills known only to the great singers. *The Lonely Dancer*, and that magical poem, *To a Bird at Dawn*—will they ever perish, ever be forgotten? They have added a luster to the poetic glory of the world. Le Gallienne is one of the great poets of the age.

### *The Illusion of War*

WAR I abhor,  
And yet how sweet  
The sound along the marching street  
Of drum and fife; and I forget  
Wet eyes of widows, and forget  
Broken old mothers, and the whole  
Dark butchery without a soul.

## RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

Without a soul—save this bright drink  
Of heady music, sweet as hell;  
And even my peace-abiding feet  
Go marching with the marching street,  
For yonder, yonder goes the fife,  
And what care I for human life!

The tears fill my astonished eyes,  
And my full heart is like to break;  
And yet 'tis all embannered lies,  
A dream those little drummers make.

O it is wickedness to clothe  
Yon hideous grinning thing that stalks  
Hidden in music, like a queen  
That in a garden of glory walks,  
Till good men love the thing they loathe.  
Art, thou hast many infamies,  
But not an infamy like this.  
O stop the fife and still the drum,  
And show the monster as she is.

### *The Lonely Dancer*

I HAD no heart to join the dance,  
I danced it all so long ago—  
Ah! light-winged music out of France,  
Let other feet glide to and fro,  
Weaving new patterns of romance  
For bosoms of new-fallen snow.

## RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

But leave me thus where I may hear  
The leafy rustle of the waltz,  
The shell-like murmur in my ear,  
The silken whisper fairy-false  
Of unseen rainbows circling near,  
And the glad shuddering of the walls.

Another dance the dancers spin,  
A shadow-dance of mystic pain,  
And other partners enter in  
And dance within my lonely brain—  
The swaying woodland shod in green,  
The ghostly dancers of the rain;

The lonely dancers of the sea,  
Foam-footed on the sandy bar,  
The wizard dance of wind and tree,  
The eddying dance of stream and star:  
Yea, all these dancers tread for me  
A measure mournful and bizarre—

An echo-dance where ear is eye,  
And sound evokes the shapes of things,  
When out of silence and a sigh  
The sad world like a picture springs,  
As, when some secret bird sweeps by,  
We see it in the sound of wings.

Those human feet upon the floor,  
That eager pulse of rhythmic breath—  
How sadly to an unknown shore  
Each silver footfall hurryeth;  
A dance of autumn leaves, no more,  
On the fantastic wind of death.

## RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

Fire clasped to elemental fire,  
'Tis thus the solar atom whirls,  
The butterfly in aery gyre,  
On autumn mornings, swarms and swirls  
In dance of delicate desire  
No other than these boys and girls.

The same strange music everywhere,  
The woven paces just the same,  
Dancing from out the viewless air  
Into the void from whence they came:  
Ah! but they make a gallant flare  
Against the dark, each little flame.

And what if all the meaning lies  
Just in the music, not in those  
Who dance thus with transfigured eyes,  
Holding in vain each other close;  
Only the music never dies,  
The dance goes on—the dancer goes.

A woman dancing, or a world  
Poised on one crystal foot afar,  
In shining gulfs of silence whirled,  
Like notes of the strange music are;  
Small shape against another curled,  
Or dancing dust that makes a star.

To him who plays the violin  
All one it is who joins the reel,  
Drops from the dance, or enters in:  
So that the never-ending wheel  
Cease not its mystic course to spin,  
For weal or woe, for woe or weal.

*To a Bird at Dawn*

O BIRD that somewhere yonder sings,  
In the dim hours 'twixt dreams and dawn,  
Lone in the hush of sleeping things,  
In some sky sanctuary withdrawn;  
Your perfect song is too like pain,  
And will not let me sleep again.

I think you must be more than bird,  
A little creature of soft wings,  
Not yours this deep and thrilling word—  
Some morning planet 'tis that sings;  
Surely from no small feathered throat  
Wells that august, eternal note.

As some old language of the dead,  
In one resounding syllable,  
Says Greece and Rome and all is said—  
A simple word a child may spell;  
So in your liquid note impearled  
Sings the long epic of the world.

Unfathomed sweetness of your song,  
With ancient anguish at its core,  
What womb of elemental wrong,  
With shudder unimagined bore  
Peace so divine—what hell hath trod  
This voice that softly talks with God!

All silence in one silver flower  
Of speech that speaks not, save as speaks  
The moon in heaven, yet hath power  
To tell the soul the thing it seeks,

# RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

And pack, as by some wizard's art,  
The whole within the finite part.

To you, sweet bird, one well might feign—  
With such authority you sing  
So clear, yet so profound, a strain  
Into the simple ear of spring—  
Some secret understanding given  
Of the hid purposes of Heaven.

And all my life until this day,  
And all my life until I die,  
All joy and sorrow of the way,  
Seem calling yonder in the sky;  
And there is something the song saith  
That makes me unafraid of death.

Now the slow light fills all the trees,  
The world, before so still and strange,  
With day's familiar presences,  
Back to its common self must change,  
And little gossip shapes of song  
The porches of the morning throng.

Not yours with such as these to vie  
That of the day's small business sing,  
Voice of man's heart and of God's sky—  
But O you make so deep a thing  
Of joy, I dare not think of pain  
Until I hear your song again.

*Flos Ævorum*

YOU must mean more than just this hour,  
 You perfect thing so subtly fair,  
 Simple and complex as a flower,  
 Wrought with such planetary care;  
 How patient the eternal power  
 That wove the marvel of your hair.

How long the sunlight and the sea  
 Wove and re-wove this rippling gold  
 To rhythms of eternity;  
 And many a flashing thing grew old,  
 Waiting this miracle to be;  
 And painted marvels manifold,

Still with his work unsatisfied,  
 Eager each new effect to try,  
 The solemn artist cast aside,  
 Rainbow and shell and butterfly,  
 As some stern blacksmith scatters wide  
 The sparks that from his anvil fly.

How many shells, whorl within whorl,  
 Litter the marges of the sphere  
 With wrack of unregarded pearl,  
 To shape that little thing your ear:  
 Creation, just to make one girl,  
 Hath travailed with exceeding fear.

The moonlight of forgotten seas  
 Dwells in your eyes, and on your tongue  
 The honey of a million bees,  
 And all the sorrows of all song:

You are the ending of all these,  
The world grew old to make you young.

All time hath travelled to this rose;  
To the strange making of this face  
Came agonies of fires and snows;  
And Death and April, nights and days  
Unnumbered, unimagined throes,  
Find in this flower their meeting place.

Strange artist, to my aching thought  
Give answer: all the patient power  
That to this perfect ending wrought,  
Shall it mean nothing but an hour?  
Say not that it is all for nought  
Time brings Eternity a flower.

*A Ballad of London*

**A** H, London! London! our delight,  
Great flower that opens but at night,  
Great City of the midnight sun,  
Whose day begins when day is done.

Lamp after lamp against the sky  
Opens a sudden beaming eye,  
Leaping alight on either hand,  
The iron lilies of the Strand.

Like dragonflies, the hansoms hover,  
With jeweled eyes, to catch the lover:  
The streets are full of lights and loves,  
Soft gowns, and flutter of soiled doves.

## RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

The human moths about the light  
Dash and cling close in dazed delight,  
And burn and laugh, the world and wife,  
For this is London, this is life!

Upon thy petals butterflies,  
But at thy root, some say, there lies,  
A world of weeping trodden things,  
Poor worms that have not eyes or wings.

From out corruption of their woe  
Springs this bright flower that charms us so:  
Men die and rot deep out of sight  
To keep this jungle-flower bright.

Paris and London, World-Flowers twain  
Wherewith the World-Tree blooms again,  
Since Time hath gathered Babylon,  
And withered Rome still withers on.

Sidon and Tyre were such as ye,  
How bright they shone upon the tree!  
But Time hath gathered, both are gone,  
And no man sails to Babylon.

*Regret*

ONE asked of regret,  
And I made reply:  
To have held the bird,  
    And let it fly;  
To have seen the star  
    For a moment nigh,  
And lost it  
    Through a slothful eye;  
To have plucked the flower  
    And cast it by;  
To have one only hope—  
    To die.

## ERNEST DOWSON

ENGLAND, 1867—1900

Dowson's life is one of the tragedies of genius. He did not have the strength of character to stand firm against the increasing disasters of existence—against disease and penury. He tried—foolishly—to find forgetfulness in the bottle, while he found his only covert in the reeking haunts of the miserable in prosperous London. He belongs to the unhappy ones, like Chatterton and Poe—poetic souls of whom the world is not worthy.

Dowson had a light and airy touch in his lyrics. His *Cynara* is one of the immortal things: it has a haunting music, a pathetic cry. That one line makes the song:

“I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.”  
The line has magic, “a dying fall.”

### *Cynara*

LAST night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and  
mine

There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed  
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;  
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,

Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head.  
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,  
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;  
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;  
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,

When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:  
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,  
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,  
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;  
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,

Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:  
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,  
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,  
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;  
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,

Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:  
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

### *Dregs*

THE fire is out, and spent the warmth thereof,  
(This is the end of every song man sings!)  
The golden wine is drunk, the dregs remain,  
Bitter as wormwood and as salt as pain;  
And health and hope have gone the way of love  
Into that drear oblivion of lost things.  
Ghosts go along with us until the end;  
This was a mistress, this, perhaps, a friend.  
With pale, indifferent eyes, we sit and wait  
For the dropped curtain and the closing gate:  
This is the end of all the songs man sings.

“A. E.” (GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL)

IRELAND, 1867—

RUSSELL joined Yeats, Hyde, Katharine Tynan, Padraic Colum, Lady Gregory and others in the great movement known as “The Celtic Revival.” The mystic glamor dominates his poems. Yeats says that he finds them “revealing in all things a kind of scented flame consuming them from within.” Let it be said in Russell’s honor that he is a man of action as well as poet of the mystic vision.

*Truth*

THE hero first thought it—  
To him ’twas a deed:  
To those who retaught it,  
A chain on their speed.

The fire that we kindled,  
A beacon by night,  
When darkness has dwindled  
Grows pale in the light.

For life has no glory  
Stays long in one dwelling,  
And time has no story  
That’s true twice in telling.

And only the teaching  
That never was spoken  
Is worthy thy reaching,  
The fountain unbroken.

*Dust*

**I** HEARD them in their sadness say,  
“The earth rebukes the thought of God:  
We are but embers wrapped in clay,  
A little nobler than the sod.”

But I have touched the lips of clay,  
Mother, thy rudest sod to me  
Is thrilled with fire of hidden day,  
And haunted by all mystery.

*A Memory of Earth*

**I**N the west dusk silver sweet,  
Down the violet-scented ways,  
As I moved with quiet feet  
I was met by mighty days.

On the hedge the hanging dew  
Glassed the eve and stars and skies;  
While I gazed a madness grew  
Into thundered battle-cries.

Where the hawthorn glimmered white  
Flashed the spear and fell the stroke,  
Ah, what faces pale and bright  
Where the dazzling battle broke!

There a hero-hearted queen  
With young beauty lit the van.  
Gone! the darkness flowed between  
All the ancient wars of man.

## "A. E." (GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL)

While I paced the valley's gloom,  
Where the rabbits pattered near,  
Shone a temple and a tomb  
With a legend carven clear:

*Time put by a myriad fates  
That her day might dawn in glory:  
Death made wide a million gates  
So to close her tragic story.*

## LIONEL JOHNSON

ENGLAND, 1867—1902

JOHNSON was English-born, although he joined the modern Irish movement. Many of his poems are pervaded by an atmosphere of religious mysticism.

### *The Precept of Silence*

I KNOW you: solitary griefs,  
Desolate passions, aching hours!  
I know you: tremulous beliefs,  
Agonized hopes, and ashen flowers!

The winds are sometimes sad to me;  
The starry spaces full of fear:  
Mine is the sorrow on the sea,  
And mine the sigh of places drear.

Some players upon plaintive strings  
Publish their wistfulness abroad:  
I have not spoken of these things,  
Save to one man, and unto God.

*By the Statue of King Charles at  
Charing Cross*

**S**OMBRE and rich, the skies;  
Great glooms, and starry plains.  
Gently the night wind sighs;  
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings  
Around me: and around  
The saddest of all kings  
Crowned and again discrowned.

Comely and calm, he rides  
Hard by his own Whitehall:  
Only the night wind glides:  
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court: and yet,  
The stars his courtiers are:  
Stars in their stations set,  
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,  
The fair and fatal king;  
Dark night is all his own,  
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate:  
The stars, or those sad eyes?  
Which are more still and great:  
Those brows, or the dark skies?

## LIONEL JOHNSON

Although his whole heart yearn  
In passionate tragedy:  
Never was face so stern  
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death  
By beauty made amends:  
The passing of his breath  
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life, and hapless? Nay:  
Through death, life grew sublime.  
*Speak after sentence?* Yea:  
And to the end of time.

Armored he rides, his head  
Bare to the stars of doom:  
He triumphs now, the dead,  
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,  
Vexed in the world's employ:  
His soul was of the saints,  
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe!  
Men hunger for thy grace:  
And through the night I go,  
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps;  
When all the cries are still:  
The stars and heavenly deeps  
Work out a perfect will.

## LAURENCE HOUSMAN

ENGLAND, 1867—

L AURENCE HOUSMAN, artist and author, brother of A. E. Housman, has written, edited and illustrated many books of prose and verse.

Not the rose of dawn, but the gray of twilight seems to tinge the atmosphere of Housman's poetry as seen in *Green Arras* and *Spikenard*. His artistry is true and terse, his imagination keen, though somber. With an intensely devout spirit, he seems to face life and death not so much with joyous fortitude as with a sad resignation.

### *Separation*

*"Verily Death Is This"*

I HEARD your voice, you told  
Of the past that could not die;  
For the years had your face to fold,  
And my spirit your eyes for skies  
To behold life by.

And still, as we clasped, you told  
Of a future that never can be.  
Now the grave has your face to fold,  
Now my spirit your ghost, life's most  
Grown cold for me.

You were my eyes in the past:  
Of the future can you not see  
How you, my lost, are the last  
Help God drew away from my heart,  
And cast from me.

## LAURENCE HOUSMAN

We will part for a little space,  
Till the whirlwind trumpets blow:  
When we meet at the Judgment-place  
You will pass, oh, strange, oh, change!  
A face that you will not know!

### *From the "Insets" in "All Fellows"*

*Here the poet leads us down into the great deeps. Is the Higher One not sharing all our sorrow, all our struggle?*

DEAR heart, when with a twofold mind  
I pray for bitter grace;  
And from my pit of torment find  
Your breath upon my face,

And hear you without thought of fear  
Bid me to guard you well,  
And guide your footsteps to win clear—  
When my feet walk in hell:

I wonder, how can God be glad  
To hear men praise Him so,  
Who makes His piteous earth so sad  
A lot to undergo?

Or does He, too, dip Feet in fire,  
And share the thirster's thirst;  
And listen to man's great desire  
Holding a heart to burst?

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

ENGLAND, 1868—1915

PHILLIPS startled the world with his poetic dramas—*Herod*, *Ulysses*, and *Paola and Francesca*. Some of his poems, like his *Marpessa*, have a rare beauty. Many of his songs are haunted with a sense of the world-old pathos of our mortal struggle.

Phillips, perhaps overpraised at first, has now fallen into undeserved neglect. He was versed in Milton, Keats, Shelley and Tennyson; but he was not a mere imitator of them. He touched some of Tennyson's themes, but "with an intensity of passion beyond Tennyson's reach." He was a poet with powerful poetic gifts. Sidney Colvin says justly: "Phillips will some day be recognized as having belonged, by the gift of passion ('the all in all in poetry,' as Lamb has it) by natural largeness of style and pomp and melody of rhythm and diction, as well as by intensity of imaginative vision in those fields where his imagination was really awake—be recognized as having belonged to the great lineage and high tradition of English poetry."

### *A Dream*

MY dead love came to me, and said:  
"God gives me one hour's rest,  
To spend with thee on earth again:  
How shall we spend it best?"

"Why, as of old," I said; and so  
We quarrelled, as of old;  
But, when I turned to make my peace,  
That one short hour was told.

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

### *From "Marpessa"*

*Marpessa, being given by Zeus her choice between the god Apollo and Idas, a mortal, chose Idas. Apollo is petitioning her:*

**O** BRIEF and breathing creature, wilt thou cease  
Once having been? Thy doom doth make thee  
rich,

And the low grave doth make thee exquisite.

But if thou'l live with me, then will I kiss

Warm immortality into thy lips;

And I will carry thee above the world,

To share my ecstasy of flinging beams,

And scattering without intermission joy.

And thou shalt know that first leap of the sea

Toward me; the grateful upward look of earth,

Emerging roseate from her bath of dew—

We two in heaven dancing—Babylon

Shall flash and murmur, and cry from under us,

And Nineveh catch fire, and at our feet

Be hurled with her inhabitants, and all

Adoring Asia kindle and hugely bloom—

We two in heaven running—continents

Shall lighten, ocean unto ocean flash,

And rapidly laugh till all this world is warm.

Or since thou art a woman, thou shalt have

More tender tasks; to steal upon the sea,

A long expected bliss to tossing men.

Or build upon the evening sky some wished

And glorious metropolis of cloud.

Thou shalt persuade the harvest and bring on

The deeper green; or silently attend

The fiery funeral of foliage old,

Connive with Time serene and the good hours.

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

Or—for I know thy heart—a dearer toil—  
To lure into the air a face long sick,  
To gild the brow that from its lead looks up,  
To shine on the unforgiven of this world;  
With slow sweet surgery restore the brain,  
And to dispel shadows and shadowy fear.”

When he had spoken, humbly Idas said:  
“After such argument what can I plead?  
Or what pale promise make? Yet since it is  
In women to pity rather than to aspire,  
A little I will speak. I love thee then  
Not only for thy body packed with sweet  
Of all this world, that cup of brimming June,  
That jar of violet wine set in the air,  
That palest rose sweet in the night of life;  
Nor for that stirring bosom all besieged  
By drowsing lovers, or thy perilous hair;  
Nor for that face that might indeed provoke  
Invasion of old cities; no, nor all  
Thy freshness stealing on me like strange sleep.  
Not for this only do I love thee, but  
Because Infinity upon thee broods;  
And thou art full of whispers and of shadows.  
Thou meanest what the sea had striven to say  
So long, and yearned up the cliffs to tell;  
Thou art what all the winds have uttered not,  
What the still night suggesteth to the heart.  
Thy voice is like to music heard ere birth,  
Some spirit lute touched on a spirit sea;  
Thy face remembered is from other worlds,  
It has been died for, though I know not when,  
It has been sung of, though I know not where.  
It has the strangeness of the luring West,  
And of sad sea-horizons: beside thee

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

I am aware of other times and lands,  
Of birth far-back, of lives in many stars.  
O beauty lone and like a candle clear  
In this dark country of the world! Thou art  
My woe, my early light, my music dying."

### *I in the Greyness Rose*

**I** IN the greyness rose;  
I could not sleep for thinking of one dead.  
Then to the chest I went,  
Where lie the things of my belovèd spread.

Quickly these I took;  
A little glove, a sheet of music torn,  
Paintings, ill-done, perhaps;  
Then lifted up a dress that she had worn.

And now I came to where  
Her letters are; they lie beneath the rest;  
And read them in the haze;  
She spoke of many things, was sore opprest.

But these things moved me not;  
Not when she spoke of being parted quite,  
Or being misunderstood,  
Or growing weary of the world's great fight.

Not even when she wrote  
Of our dear child, and the handwriting swerved;  
Not even then I shook:  
Not even by such words was I unnerved.

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

I thought, she is at peace;  
Whither the child is gone, she, too, has passed.  
And a much-needed rest  
Is fallen upon her, she is still at last.

But when at length I took  
From under all those letters one small sheet,  
Folded and writ in haste;  
Why did my heart with sudden sharpness beat?

Alas! it was not sad!  
Her saddest words I had read calmly o'er.  
Alas! it had no pain!  
Her painful words, all these I knew before.

A hurried, happy line!  
A little jest, too slight for one so dead:  
This did I not endure:  
Then with a shuddering heart no more I read.

### *The Parting of Launcelot and Guinevere*

INTO a high-walled nunnery had fled  
Queen Guinevere, amid the shade to weep,  
And to repent 'mid solemn boughs, and love  
The cold globe of the moon; but now as she  
Meekly the scarcely-breathing garden walked,  
She saw, and stood, and swooned at Launcelot,  
Who burned in sudden steel like a blue flame  
Amid the cloister. Then, when she revived,  
He came and looked on her: in the dark place  
So pale her beauty was, the sweetness such  
That he half-closed his eyes and deeply breathed;  
And as he gazed, there came into his mind

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

That night of May, with pulsing stars, the strange  
Perfumèd darkness, and delicious guilt  
In silent hour; but at the last he said:  
"Suffer me, lady, but to kiss thy lips  
Once, and to go away for evermore."  
But she replied, "Nay, I beseech thee, go!  
Sweet were those kisses in the deep of night;  
But from those kisses is this ruin come.  
Sweet was thy touch, but now I wail at it,  
And I have hope to see the face of Christ:  
Many are saints in heaven who sinned as I."  
Then said he, "Since it is thy will, I go."  
But those that stood around could scarce endure  
To see the dolor of these two; for he  
Swooned in his burning armor to her face,  
And both cried out as at the touch of spears:  
And as two trees at midnight, when the breeze  
Comes over them, now to each other bend,  
And now withdraw; so mournfully these two  
Still drooped together and still drew apart.  
Then like one dead her ladies bore away  
The heavy queen; and Launcelot went out  
And through a forest weeping rode all night.

## LAURENCE BINYON

ENGLAND, 1869—

LAURENCE BINYON (a cousin of Stephen Phillips) is an English poet of distinction, who has some of the calm dignified approach of Matthew Arnold. He has been connected with the British Museum in an official capacity since 1893. He won the Newdigate Prize at Oxford in 1890. His publications include *Lyric Poems* (1894); *Poems* (1895); *England and Other Poems* (1909).

### *O World, Be Nobler!*

O WORLD, be nobler, for her sake!  
If she but knew thee what thou art,  
What wrongs are borne, what deeds are done  
In thee, beneath thy daily sun,  
Know'st thou not that her tender heart  
For pain and very shame would break?  
O world, be nobler, for her sake!

### *A Song*

FOR Mercy, Courage, Kindness, Mirth,  
There is no measure upon earth.  
Nay, they wither, root and stem,  
If an end be set to them.

Overbrim and overflow,  
If your own heart you would know;  
For the spirit born to bless  
Lives but in its own excess.

*Nature*

*Here is a sonnet that touches one of the deepest problems of philosophy: Can we find the loving Divine Father in Nature, or is she cold and indifferent to all human welfare?*

**B**ECAUSE out of corruption burns the rose,  
And to corruption lovely cheeks descend;  
Because with her right hand she heals the woes  
Her left hand wrought, loath not to wound nor mend;  
I praise indifferent Nature, affable  
To all philosophies, of each unknown;  
Though in my listening ear she leans to tell  
Some private word, as if for me alone.

Still, like an artist, she her meaning hides,  
Silent, while thousand tongues proclaim it clear;  
Ungrudging, her large feast for all provides;  
Tender, exultant, savage, blithe, austere,  
In each man's heart she sets the proper tool,  
For the wise Wisdom, Folly for the fool.

ANTHONY C. DEANE

ENGLAND, 1870—

THIS poet has been a vicar in the Church of England since 1916. His long list of light verse includes several excellent parodies, the best of which are to be found in his *New Rhymes for Old*.

*The Ballad of the Billycock*

IT was the good ship *Billycock*, with thirteen men aboard,

Athirst to grapple with their country's foes—  
A crew, 'twill be admitted, not numerically fitted  
To navigate a battleship in prose.

It was the good ship *Billycock* put out from Plymouth Sound,

While lustily the gallant heroes cheered,  
And all the air was ringing with the merry bo'sun's singing,  
Till in the gloom of night she disappeared.

But when the morning broke on her, behold, a dozen ships,

(Or, if that isn't plenty, I will gladly make it twenty)  
A dozen ships of France around her lay,  
And hemmed her close in Salamander Bay.

Then to the Lord High Admiral there spake a cabin-boy:

“Methinks,” he said, “the odds are somewhat great,  
And, in the present crisis, a cabin-boy's advice is  
That you and France had better arbitrate!”

## LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS

ENGLAND, 1870—

DOUGLAS was at one time editor of *The Academy*. More recently he has written a volume to set forth his memories and opinions of Oscar Wilde. His sonnet to this friend is perhaps his finest poetic expression.

### *The Dead Poet*

I DREAMED of him last night, I saw his face  
All radiant and unshadowed of distress,  
And as of old, in music measureless,  
I heard his golden voice and marked him trace  
Under the common thing the hidden grace,  
And conjure wonder out of emptiness,  
Till mean things put on beauty like a dress  
And all the world was an enchanted place.

And then methought outside a fast-locked gate  
I mourned the loss of unrecorded words,  
Forgotten tales and mysteries half said.

Wonders that might have been articulate,  
And voiceless thoughts like murdered singing birds.  
And so I woke and knew that he was dead.

*From "The City of the Soul"*

EACH new hour's passage is the acolyte  
Of inarticulate song and syllable,  
And every passing moment is a bell  
To mourn the death of undiscerned delight.  
Where is the sun that made the noonday bright,  
And where the midnight moon? O let us tell,  
In long carved line and painted parable,  
How the white road curves down into the night.

Only to build one crystal barrier  
Against this sea which beats upon our days;  
To ransom one lost moment with a rhyme!  
Or if fate cries and grudging gods demur,  
To clutch Life's hair, and thrust one naked phrase  
Like a lean knife between the ribs of Time.

## WILLIAM H. DAVIES

ENGLAND, 1870—

FIRST known as a tramp poet, who had lost a leg while riding a freight train in Canada, and had been sent to the workhouse for vagrancy in New Haven, Connecticut, W. H. Davies has won for himself a position as one of the most distinguished modern lyric poets. Following his vagrom years in America, as recorded in his *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*, the poet has lived in his native England. He was "discovered" by Bernard Shaw, to whom some specimen poems were submitted in manuscript, and who records the story thus: "In the year 1905, I received by post a volume of poems by one Wm. H. Davies. . . . It was marked 'Price, half a crown.' An accompanying letter asked me very civilly if I required a half-crown book of verses; and if so, would I please send the author the half-crown; if not, would I return the book. This was attractively simple and sensible."

The Davies poems soon found their way into the world. There is a strange artlessness, delightful naïveté, in many of them, as if they had been written by Adam in his first happiness in the Garden.

### *A Greeting*

GOOD-MORNING, Life—and all  
Things glad and beautiful.  
My pockets nothing hold,  
But he that owns the gold,  
The Sun, is my great friend—  
His spending has no end.

Hail to the morning sky,  
Which bright clouds measure high;  
Hail to you birds whose throats  
Would number leaves by notes;  
Hail to you shady bowers,  
And you green fields of flowers.

Hail to you women fair,  
That make a show so rare  
In cloth as white as milk—  
Be't calico or silk;  
Good-morning, Life—and all  
Things glad and beautiful.

*Leisure*

**W**HAT is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare?

No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows?

No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass?

No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night?

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance?

No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich the smile her eyes began?

A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

*In the Country*

THIS life is sweetest; in this wood  
I hear no children cry for food;  
I see no woman white with care,  
No man with muscles wasting here.

No doubt it is a selfish thing  
To fly from human suffering:  
No doubt he is a selfish man,  
Who shuns poor creatures sad and wan.

But 'tis a wretched life to face  
Hunger in almost every place;  
Cursed with a hand that's empty, when  
The heart is full to help all men.

Can I admire the statue great,  
When living men starve at its feet!  
Can I admire the park's green tree,  
A roof for homeless misery!

*Sheep*

WHEN I was once in Baltimore,  
A man came up to me and cried,  
"Come, I have eighteen hundred sheep,  
And we will sail on Tuesday's tide.

"If you will sail with me, young man,  
I'll pay you fifty shillings down;  
These eighteen hundred sheep I take  
From Baltimore to Glasgow town."

He paid me fifty shillings down,  
I sailed with eighteen hundred sheep;  
We soon had cleared the harbor's mouth,  
We soon were in the salt sea deep.

The first night we were out at sea  
Those sheep were quiet in their mind;  
The second night they cried with fear—  
They smelt no pastures in the wind.

They sniffed, poor things, for their green fields,  
They cried so loud I could not sleep:  
For fifty thousand shillings down  
I would not sail again with sheep.

*The Example*

HERE'S an example from  
A Butterfly;  
That on a rough, hard rock  
Happy can lie;  
Friendless and all alone  
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,  
No care take I;  
I'll make my joy like this  
Small Butterfly;  
Whose happy heart has power  
To make a stone a flower.

*Nature's Friend*

SAY what you like,  
All things love me!  
I pick no flowers—  
That wins the Bee.

The Summer's Moths  
Think my hand one  
To touch their wings—  
With Wind and Sun.

The garden Mouse  
Comes near to play;  
Indeed, he turns  
His eyes away.

W. H. DAVIES

The Wren knows well  
I rob no nest;  
When I look in,  
She still will rest.

The hedge stops Cows,  
Or they would come  
After my voice  
Right to my home.

The Horse can tell,  
Straight from my lip,  
My hand could not  
Hold any whip.

Say what you like,  
All things love me!  
Horse, Cow, and Mouse,  
Bird, Moth and Bee.

*The Sleepers*

**A**S I walked down the waterside  
This silent morning, wet and dark;  
Before the cocks in farmyards crowed,  
Before the dogs began to bark;  
Before the hour of five was struck  
By old Westminster's mighty clock:

As I walked down the waterside  
This morning, in the cold damp air,  
I saw a hundred women and men  
Huddled in rags and sleeping there:

## W. H. DAVIES

These people have no work, thought I,  
And long before their time they die.

That moment, on the waterside,  
A lighted car came at a bound;  
I looked inside, and saw a score  
Of pale and weary men that frowned;  
Each man sat in a huddled heap,  
Carried to work while fast asleep.

Ten cars rushed down the waterside,  
Like lighted coffins in the dark;  
With twenty dead men in each car,  
That must be brought alive by work:  
These people work too hard, thought I,  
And long before their time they die.

### *A Great Time*

SWEET Chance, that led my steps abroad,  
Beyond the town, where wild flowers grow—  
A rainbow and a cuckoo, Lord,  
How rich and great the times are now!  
Know, all ye sheep  
And cows, that keep  
On staring that I stand so long  
In grass that's wet from heavy rain—  
A rainbow and a cuckoo's song  
May never come together again;  
May never come  
This side the tomb.

## HILAIRE BELLOC

ENGLAND, 1870—

BELLOC is of French and English descent, an Oxford man, a novelist, a historian, and an essayist; he has been a member of Parliament. *Verses* (1910) names his book of serious poems. His delightful books of verse for children are *The Bad Child's Book of Beasts* and *More Beasts for Worse Children*. As a humorist and satirist he excels.

### *The Early Morning*

THE moon on the one hand, the dawn on the other:  
The moon is my sister, the dawn is my brother.  
The moon on my left, the dawn on my right.  
My brother, good morning: my sister, good-night.

### *Courtesy*

OF Courtesy, it is much less  
Than courage of heart or holiness;  
Yet in my walks it seems to me  
That the Grace of God is in Courtesy.

On monks I did in Storrington fall:  
They took me straight into their hall:  
I saw Three Pictures on a wall,  
And Courtesy was in them all.

## HILAIRE BELLOC

The first the Annunciation;  
The second the Visitation;  
The third the Consolation  
Of God that was Our Lady's Son.

The first was of Saint Gabriel;  
On wings a-flame from Heaven he fell;  
And as he went upon one knee  
He shone with heavenly Courtesy.

Our Lady out of Nazareth rode—  
It was her month of heavy load;  
Yet was her face both great and kind,  
For Courtesy was in her mind.

The third it was our Little Lord,  
Whom all the kings in arms adored;  
He was so small you could not see  
His large intent of Courtesy.

Our Lord, that was Our Lady's Son,  
Go bless you, people, one by one:  
My rhyme is written, my work is done.

### *The Rebel*

**T**HREE is a wall of which the stones  
Are lies and bribes and dead men's bones.  
And wrongfully this evil wall  
Denies what all men made for all,  
And shamelessly this wall surrounds  
Our homestead and our native grounds.

## HILAIRE BELLOC

But I will gather and I will ride,  
And I will summon a countryside,  
And many a man shall hear my halloo  
Who never had thought the horn to follow;  
And many a man shall ride with me  
Who never had thought on earth to see  
High Justice in her armory.

When we find them where they stand,  
A mile of men on either hand,  
I mean to charge from right away  
And force the flanks of their array,  
And press them inward from the plains,  
And drive them clamoring down the lanes,  
And gallop and harry and have them down,  
And carry the gates and hold the town.  
Then shall I rest me from my ride  
With my great anger satisfied.

Only, before I eat and drink,  
When I have killed them all, I think  
That I will batter their carven names,  
And slit the pictures in their frames,  
And burn for scent their cedar door,  
And melt the gold their women wore,  
And hack their horses at the knees,  
And hew to death their timber trees,  
And plough their gardens deep and through—  
And all these things I mean to do  
For fear perhaps my little son  
Should break his hands, as I have done.

*The Vulture*

**T**HE Vulture eats between his meals,  
And that's the reason why  
He very, very rarely feels  
As well as you or I.  
His eye is dull, his head is bald,  
His neck is growing thinner.  
Oh, what a lesson for us all  
To only eat at dinner.

*The Gnu*

**G** STANDS for Gnu, whose weapons of defense  
Are long, sharp, curling horns, and common-  
sense.  
To these he adds a name so short and strong,  
That even hardy Boers pronounce it wrong.  
How often on a bright autumnal day  
The pious people of Pretoria say  
"Come, let us hunt the—" Then no more is heard,  
But sounds of strong men struggling with a word;  
Meanwhile the distant Gnu with grateful eyes  
Observes his opportunity and flies.

*The Frog*

**B**E kind and tender to the Frog,  
And do not call him names,  
As "Slimy-skin," or "Polly-wog,"  
Or likewise "Uncle James,"  
Or "Gape-a-grin," or "Toad-gone-wrong,"  
Or "Billy-Bandy Knees";  
The frog is justly sensitive  
To epithets like these.

No animal will more repay  
A treatment kind and fair;  
At least so lonely people say  
Who keep a frog (and by the way,  
They are extremely rare).

NORA HOPPER

IRELAND, 1871—1906

**N**OORA HOPPER, author of *The Quicken Bough* and *Songs of the Morning*, is one of the later writers building upon Gaelic myth and legend, instead of Greek or Roman or Norse or German. Instead of Pan singing among the rushes, Daluan (a sort of Irish Pan) is singing among the bogs, and certain folk may be in and out of fairy-land "away", and not disclose their travels.

*The Fairy Fiddler*

**T**IS I go fiddling, fiddling,  
By weedy ways forlorn;  
I make the blackbird's music  
Ere in his breast 'tis born;  
The sleeping larks I waken  
'Twixt the midnight and the morn.

No man alive has seen me,  
But women hear me play  
Sometimes at door or window,  
Fiddling the souls away—  
The child's soul and the colleen's  
Out of the covering clay.

None of my fairy kinsmen  
Make music with me now:  
Along the raths I wander  
Or ride the whitethorn bough,  
But the wild swans they know me,  
And the horse that draws the plough.

## RALPH HODGSON

ENGLAND, 1871—

**T**HIS brilliant poet has enriched the world with many audacious and vivid poems—the crowning one being his unforgettable *Eve*. In this poem, the mother of mankind appears in a new light, appears as a naïve country girl, basket on arm, out gathering fruit from the Garden, and meeting the subtle Serpent with the fearlessness of a wide-eyed happy girl. Hodgson's verses have frequent touches of the pure fire. You see in the first little poem how a true poet preaches a big sermon.

### *Stupidity Street*

**I** SAW with open eyes  
Singing birds sweet  
Sold in the shops  
For the people to eat,  
Sold in the shops of  
Stupidity Street.

I saw in a vision  
The worm in the wheat,  
And in the shops nothing  
For people to eat:  
Nothing for sale in  
Stupidity Street.

*The Mystery*

**H**E came and took me by the hand  
Up to a red rose tree;  
He kept His meaning to Himself  
But gave a rose to me.

I did not pray Him to lay bare  
The mystery to me;  
Enough the rose was Heaven to smell,  
And His own face to see.

*Eve*

**E**VE, with her basket, was  
Deep in the bells and grass,  
Wading in bells and grass  
Up to her knees.  
Picking a dish of sweet  
Berries and plums to eat,  
Down in the bells and grass  
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a  
Corner the cobra lay,  
Curled round a bough of the  
Cinnamon tall. . . .  
Now to get even and  
Humble proud heaven and  
Now was the moment or  
Never at all.

"Eva!" Each syllable  
Light as a flower fell,  
"Eva!" he whispered the  
Wondering maid,  
Soft as a bubble sung  
Out of a linnet's lung,  
Soft and most silverly  
"Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite;  
Eve, with her body white,  
Supple and smooth to her  
Slim finger tips;  
Wondering, listening,  
Listening, wondering,  
Eve with a berry  
Half-way to her lips.

Oh, had our simple Eve  
Seen through the make-believe!  
Had she but known the  
Pretender he was!  
Out of the boughs he came,  
Whispering still her name,  
Tumbling in twenty rings  
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair  
In the world anywhere—  
Eve in the bells and grass  
Kneeling, and he  
Telling his story low. . . .  
Singing birds saw them go  
Down the dark path to  
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh, what a clatter when  
 Titmouse and Jenny Wren  
 Saw him successful and  
 Taking his leave!  
 How the birds rated him,  
 How they all hated him!  
 How they all pitied  
 Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying  
 Outside in the lane,  
 Eve, with no dish of sweet  
 Berries and plums to eat,  
 Haunting the gate of the  
 Orchard in vain. . . .  
 Picture the lewd delight  
 Under the hill to-night—  
 “Eva!” the toast goes round,  
 “Eva!” again.

### *Couplet*

**G**OD loves an idle rainbow,  
 No less than laboring seas.

### *The Bull*

*I have not seen this poem in any other anthology; and yet it is a unique and marvelous creation, a little epic of the wilderness with the Bull for its lusty hero. It would be well to read it in connection with some of Joaquin Miller's cattle poems of the Sierras.*

SEE an old unhappy bull,  
Sick in soul and body both,  
Slouching in the undergrowth  
Of the forest beautiful,  
Banished from the herd he led,  
Bulls and cows a thousand head.

Cranes and gaudy parrots go  
Up and down the burning sky:  
Tree-top cats purr drowsily  
In the dim-day green below;  
And troops of monkeys, nutting, some,  
All disputing, go and come.

And things abominable sit  
Picking offal, buck or swine:  
On the mess and over it  
Burnished flies and beetles shine,  
And spiders big as bladders lie  
Under hemlocks ten foot high.

And a dotted serpent curled  
Round and round and round a tree,  
Yellowing its greenery,  
Keeps a watch on all the world,  
All the world and this old bull  
In the forest beautiful.

Bravely by his fall he came:  
One he led, a bull of blood  
Newly come to lustihood,  
Fought and put his prince to shame,  
Snuffed and pawed the prostrate head  
Tameless even while it bled.

There they left him, every one,  
Left him there without a lick,  
Left him for the birds to pick,  
Left him there for carrion,  
Vilely from their bosom cast  
Wisdom, worth and love at last.

When the lion left his lair  
And roared his beauty through the hills,  
And the vultures pecked their quills  
And flew into the middle air,  
Then this prince no more to reign  
Came to life and lived again.

He snuffed the herd in far retreat,  
He saw the blood upon the ground,  
And snuffed the burning airs around  
Still with beevish odors sweet,  
While the blood ran down his head  
And his mouth ran slaver red.

Pity him, this fallen chief,  
All his splendor, all his strength,  
All his body's breadth and length  
Dwindled down with shame and grief,  
Half the bull he was before,  
Bones and leather, nothing more.

See him standing dewlap-deep  
In the rushes at the lake,  
Surly, stupid, half asleep,  
Waiting for his heart to break,  
And the birds to join the flies  
Feasting at his bloodshot eyes;

## RALPH HODGSON

Standing with his head hung down  
In a stupor, dreaming things:  
Green savannas, jungles brown,  
Battlefields and bellowings,  
Bulls undone and lions dead,  
And vultures flapping overhead.

Dreaming things; of days he spent  
With his mother gaunt and lean  
In the valley warm and green,  
Full of baby wonderment,  
Blinking out of silly eyes  
At a hundred mysteries—

Dreaming over once again  
How he wandered with a throng  
Of bulls and cows a thousand strong,  
Wandered on from plain to plain,  
Up the hill and down the dale,  
Always at his mother's tail;

How he lagged behind the herd,  
Lagged and tottered, weak of limb,  
And she turned and ran to him  
Blaring at the loathly bird  
Stationed always in the skies,  
Waiting for the flesh that dies—

Dreaming maybe of a day  
When her drained and drying paps  
Turned him to the sweets and saps,  
Richer fountains by the way,  
And she left the bull she bore  
And he looked to her no more.

## RALPH HODGSON

And his little frame grew stout,  
And his little legs grew strong,  
And the way was not so long;  
And his little horns came out,  
And he played at butting trees  
And boulder-stones and tortoises,

Joined a game of knobby skulls  
With the youngsters of his year,  
All the other little bulls,  
Learning both to bruise and bear,  
Learning how to stand a shock  
Like a little bull of rock—

Dreaming of a day less dim,  
Dreaming of a time less far,  
When the faint but certain star  
Of destiny burned clear for him,  
And a fierce and wild unrest  
Broke the quiet of his breast,

And the gristles of his youth  
Hardened in his comely pow,  
And he came to fighting growth,  
Beat his bull and won his cow,  
And flew his tail and trampled off  
Past the tallest, vain enough,

And curved about in splendor full  
And curved again and snuffed the airs  
As who should say, "Come out who dares!"  
And all beheld a bull, a Bull,  
And knew that here was surely one  
That backed for no bull, fearing none.

And the leader of the herd  
 Looked and saw, and beat the ground,  
 And shook the forest with his sound,  
 Bellowed at the loathly bird  
 Stationed always in the skies,  
 Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming, this old bull forlorn,  
 Surely dreaming of the hour  
 When he came to sultan power,  
 And they owned him master-horn,  
 Chieftest bull of all among  
 Bulls and cows a thousand strong;

And in all the tramping herd  
 Not a bull that barred his way,  
 Not a cow that said him nay,  
 Not a bull or cow that erred  
 In the furnace of his look  
 Dared a second, worse rebuke—

Not in all the forest wide,  
 Jungle, thicket, pasture, fen,  
 Not another dared him then,  
 Dared him and again defied—  
 Not a sovereign buck or boar  
 Came a second time for more—

Not a serpent that survived  
 Once the terrors of his hoof  
 Risked a second time reproof,  
 Came a second time and lived,  
 Not a serpent in its skin  
 Came again for discipline—

ot a leopard bright as flame,  
Flashing fingerhooks of steel,  
That a wooden tree might feel,  
Met his fury once and came  
For a second reprimand,  
Not a leopard in the land—

Not a lion of them all,  
Not a lion of the hills,  
Hero of a thousand kills,  
Dared a second fight and fall,  
Dared that ram terrific twice,  
Paid a second time the price.

Pity him, this dupe of dream,  
Leader of the herd again  
Only in his daft old brain,  
Once again the bull supreme  
And bull enough to bear the part  
Only in his tameless heart.

Pity him that he must wake;  
Even now the swarm of flies  
Blackening his bloodshot eyes  
Bursts and blusters round the lake,  
Scattered from the feast half-fed,  
By great shadows overhead;

And the dreamer turns away  
From his visionary herds  
And his splendid yesterday,  
Turns to meet the loathly birds  
Flocking round him from the skies,  
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

## MOIRA O'NEILL

IRELAND

I CAN hear of only one volume from her pen, a little one: *Songs from Glens of Antrim*. Stopford Brooke says: "Her poetry is Irish of the Irish—tender, wistful, hovering on the borderland between tears and laughter, and as musical as an old Gaelic melody. It springs straight from life."

### *A Broken Song*

*WHERE am I from?" From the green hills of Erin.*

*"Have I no song then?" My songs are all sung.*

*"What o' my love?" 'Tis alone I am farin'.*

*Old grows my heart, an' my voice yet is young.*

*"If she was tall?" Like a king's own daughter.*

*"If she was fair?" Like a mornin' o' May.*

*When she'd come laughin' 'twas the runnin' wather,  
When she'd come blusheen' 'twas the break o' day.*

*"Where did she dwell?" Where onc't I had my dwellin'.*

*"Who loved her best?" There's no one now will know.*

*"Where is she gone?" Och, why would I be tellin'!*

*Where she is gone there I can never go.*

*Beauty's a Flower*

**Y**OUTH'S for an hour,  
Beauty's a flower,  
But love is the jewel that wins the world.

Youth's for an hour, an' the taste o' life is sweet,  
Ailes was a girl that stepped on two bare feet;  
In all my days I never seen the one as fair as she,  
I'd have lost my life for Ailes, an' she never cared for  
me.

Beauty's a flower, an' the days o' life are long,  
There's little knowin' who may live to sing another  
song.  
For Ailes was the fairest, but another is my wife;  
An' Mary—God be good to her!—is all I love in life.

*Youth's for an hour,  
Beauty's a flower,  
But love is the jewel that wins the world.*

## *The Grand Match*

DENNIS was hearty when Dennis was young,  
High was his step in the jig that he sprung,  
*He had the looks an' the sootherin' tongue—*  
An' he wanted a girl wid a fortune.

Nannie was gray-eyed an' Nannie was tall,  
Fair was the face hid in under her shawl,  
Troth! an' he liked her the best o' them all—  
But she'd not a *traneen* to her fortune.

He be to look out for a likelier match,  
So he married a girl that was counted a catch,  
An' as ugly as need be, the dark little patch—  
But that was a trifle, he told her.

She brought him her good-lookin' gold to admire,  
She brought him her good-lookin' cows to his byre,  
But far from good-lookin' she sat by his fire—  
An' paid him that "thrifle" he told her.

He met pretty Nan when a month had gone by,  
An' he thought, like a fool, to get round her he'd try;  
Wid a smile on her lip an' a spark in her eye,  
She said, "How is the woman that owns ye?"

Och, never be tellin' the life that he's led!  
Sure, many's the night that he'll wish himself dead,  
For the sake of two eyes in a pretty girl's head—  
An' the tongue of the woman that owns him.

*Corrymeela*

OVER here in England I'm helpin' wi' the hay,  
An' I wisht I was in Ireland the livelong day;  
Weary on the English hay, an' sorra take the wheat!  
Och! Corrymeela an' the blue sky over it.

There's a deep, dumb river flowin' by beyont the heavy  
trees,  
This livin' air is mo'thered wi' the hummin' o' the bees;  
I wisht I'd hear the Claddagh burn go runnin' through  
the heat  
Past Corrymeela, wi' the blue sky over it.

The people that's in England is richer nor the Jews,  
There's not the smallest young gossoon but thravels in  
his shoes!  
I'd give the pipe between me teeth to see a barefut child.  
Och! Corrymeela an' the low south wind.

Here's hands so full o' money an' hearts so full o' care.  
By the luck o' love! I'd still go light for all I did go  
bare.  
"God save ye, colleen dhas," I said; the girl she thought  
me wild.  
Far Corrymeela, an' the low south wind.

D'ye mind me now, the song at night is mortal hard to  
raise,  
The girls are heavy goin' here, the boys are ill to plase;  
When ones't I'm out this workin' hive, 'tis I'll be back  
again—  
Ay, Corrymeela, in the same soft rain.

## MOIRA O'NEILL

The puff o' smoke from one ould roof before an English town!  
For a shaugh wid Andy Feelan here I'd give a silver crown;  
For a curl o' hair like Mollie's ye'll ask the like in vain,  
Sweet Corrymeela, an' the same soft rain.

JOHN McCRAE  
CANADA, 1872—1918

HE was the Colonel of a Canadian regiment in the World War; and *In Flanders Fields* is his most significant poem. Its music and pathos have wafted it around the world.

### *In Flanders Fields*

IN Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks still singing bravely fly,  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sun-set glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!  
To you, from failing hands we throw  
The torch—be yours to hold it high!  
If ye break faith with us who die,  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

EVA GORE-BOOTH  
IRELAND, 1872—

Here is one who is "half mystic, half minstrel."

*The Waves of Breffny*

THE grand road from the mountain goes shining to  
the sea,

And there is traffic on it and many a horse and cart,  
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me  
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through  
my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the  
hill,

And there is glory in it; and terror on the wind:  
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,  
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my  
mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on  
their way,

Shining green and silver with the hidden herring  
shoal;

But the little waves of Breffny have drenched my heart  
in spray,

And the little waves of Breffny go stumbling through  
my soul.

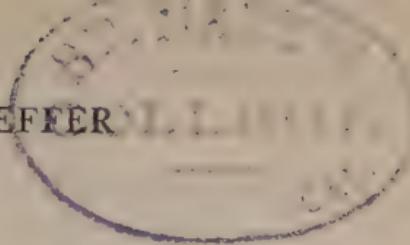
FORD MADOX HUEFFER  
ENGLAND, 1873—

THIS poet, who has now taken the name Ford Madox Ford, is a Welsh bard speaking Welsh, and also a Druid, a story writer, a critic, a former collaborator with Joseph Conrad, and former editor of *The Transatlantic Review*. His studies of Dante, Rossetti and Henry James are memorable. He is author of *On Heaven and Other Poems*.

*Clair De Lune*

I

I SHOULD like to imagine  
A moonlight in which there would be no machine-  
guns!  
For, it is possible  
To come out of a trench or a hut or a tent or a church  
all in ruins:  
To see the black perspective of long avenues  
All silent.  
The white strips of sky  
At the sides, cut by the poplar trunks:  
The white strips of sky  
Above, diminishing—  
The silence and blackness of the avenue  
Enclosed by immensities of space  
Spreading away  
Over No Man's Land. . . .



For a minute . . .

For ten . . .

There will be no star shells,  
But the untroubled stars,  
There will be no *Very* light,  
But the light of the quiet moon  
Like a swan.  
And silence. . . .

Then, far away to the right through the moonbeams  
"Wukka Wukka" will go the machine-guns,  
And, far away to the left  
Wukka Wukka.  
And sharply,  
Wuk . . . Wuk . . . and then silence  
For a space in the clear of the moon.

## II

I should like to imagine  
A moonlight in which the machine-guns of trouble  
Will be silent. . . .

Do you remember, my dear,  
Long ago, on the cliffs, in the moonlight,  
Looking over to Flatholme  
We sat . . . Long ago! . . .  
And the things that you told me . . .  
Little things in the clear of the moon,  
The little, sad things of a life. . . .

We shall do it again  
Full surely,  
Sitting still, looking over at Flatholme.

## FORD MADOX HUEFFER

Then, far away to the right  
Shall sound the Machine Guns of trouble  
*Wukka-wukka!*  
And, far away to the left, under Flatholme,  
*Wukka-wuk!* . . .

I wonder, my dear, can you stick it?  
As we should say: "Stick it, the Welch!"  
In the dark of the moon,  
Going over. . . .

## WALTER DE LA MARE

ENGLAND, 1873—

WALTER DE LA MARE has the child heart, the peering and wondering spirit. He discovers the mysterious in the common and human that is near us; and with this power, he has also a remarkable feeling for the wonder of words. At times, he has, as in *The Listeners*, the magic that creates in us a sense of the supernatural and the weird. As he leads us on, we frequently hear strange whispers and feel wafts of unearthly wind.

### *The Little Salamander*

WHEN I go free,  
I think 'twill be  
A night of stars and snow,  
And the wild fires of frost shall light  
My footsteps as I go;  
Nobody—nobody will be there  
With groping touch, or sight,  
To see me in my bush of hair  
Dance burning through the night.

*The Listeners*

IS there anybody there?" said the Traveller,  
Knocking on the moonlit door;  
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses  
Of the forest's ferny floor;  
And a bird flew up out of the turret,  
Above the Traveller's head;  
And he smote upon the door again a second time:  
"Is there anybody there?" he said.  
But no one descended to the Traveller;  
No head from the leaf-fringed sill  
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,  
Where he stood perplexed and still.  
But only a host of phantom listeners  
That dwelt in the lone house then  
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight  
To that voice from the world of men—  
Stood stronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,  
That goes down to the empty hall,  
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken  
By the lonely Traveller's call.  
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,  
Their stillness answering his cry,  
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,  
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;  
For he suddenly smote on the door, even  
Louder, and lifted his head:  
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,  
That I kept my word," he said.  
Never the least stir made the listeners,  
Though every word he spake  
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house  
From the one man left awake.

## WALTER DE LA MARE

Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,  
And the sound of iron on stone,  
And how the silence surged softly backward,  
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

### *Queen Djenira*

WHEN Queen Djenira slumbers through  
The sultry noon's repose,  
From out her dreams, as soft she lies,  
A faint thin music flows.

Her lovely hands lie narrow and pale  
With gilded nails, her head  
Couched in its banded nets of gold  
Lies pillow'd on her bed.

The little Nubian boys who fan  
Her cheeks and tresses clear,  
Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful voices  
Seem afar to hear.

They slide their eyes, and nodding, say,  
"Queen Djenira walks to-day  
The courts of the lord Pthamasar  
Where the sweet birds of Psuthys are."

And those of earth about her porch  
Of shadow cool and grey  
Their sidelong beaks in silence lean,  
And silent flit away.

*Tartary*

IF I were Lord of Tartary,  
Myself and me alone,  
My bed should be of ivory,  
    Of beaten gold my throne;  
And in my court would peacocks flaunt,  
And in my forests tigers haunt,  
And in my pools great fishes slant  
    Their fins athwart the sun.

If I were Lord of Tartary,  
    Trumpeters every day  
To every meal should summon me,  
    And in my courtyard bray;  
And in the evening lamps would shine,  
Yellow as honey, red as wine,  
While harp and flute and mandoline,  
    Made music sweet and gay.

If I were Lord of Tartary,  
    I'd wear a robe of beads,  
White and gold and green they'd be—  
    And clustered thick as seeds;  
And ere should wane the morning-star,  
I'd don my robe and scimitar,  
And zebras seven should draw my car  
    Through Tartary's dark glades.

Lord of the fruits of Tartary,  
    Her rivers silver-pale!  
Lord of the hills of Tartary,  
    Glen, thicket, wood and dale!

## WALTER DE LA MARE

Her flashing stars, her scented breeze,  
Her trembling lakes, like foamless seas,  
Her bird-delighting citron-trees  
In every purple vale!

### *All but Blind*

**A**LL but blind  
In his chambered hole  
Gropes for worms  
The four-clawed Mole.

All but blind  
In the evening sky,  
The hooded Bat  
Twirls softly by.

All but blind  
In the burning day  
The Barn-Owl blunders  
On her way.

And blind as are  
These three to me,  
So, blind to Some-one  
I must be.

*Tired Tim*

POOR tired Tim! It's sad for him.  
He lags the long bright morning through,  
Ever so tired of nothing to do;  
He moons and mopes the livelong day,  
Nothing to think about, nothing to say;  
Up to bed with his candle to creep,  
Too tired to yawn; too tired to sleep:  
Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him.

*The Linnet*

UPON this leafy bush  
With thorns and roses in it,  
Flutters a thing of light,  
A twittering linnet;  
And all the throbbing world  
Of dew and sun and air  
By this small parcel of life  
Is made more fair;  
As if each bramble-spray  
And mounded gold-wreathed furze,  
Harebell and little thyme,  
Were only hers;  
As if this beauty and grace  
Did to one bird belong,  
And, at a flutter of wing,  
Might vanish in song.

## ETHNA CARBERY

IRELAND, ?—1902

THE poems of Ethna Carbery (pen-name of Anna Johnston MacManus, first wife of Seumas MacManus) are collected under the title of *The Four Winds of Eirinn*. As her husband writes, introductorily: "Optimistic, hopeful, strong, she ever kept her face to the East: 'Only another hill or two and we'll surely meet the Dawn?'" Her work has a fervent yet tender spirit. Her early death leaves "a lonesome place" in modern Irish poetry.

### *The Love-Talker*

I MET the Love-Talker one eve in the glen,  
He was handsomer than any of our handsome  
young men,  
His eyes were blacker than the sloe, his voice sweeter far  
Than the crooning of old Kevin's pipes beyond in  
Coolnagar.

I was bound for the milking with a heart fair and free—  
My grief! my grief! that bitter hour drained the life  
from me.

I thought him human lover, though his lips on mine were  
cold,  
And the breath of death blew keen on me within his hold.

I know not what way he came, no shadow fell behind;  
But all the sighing rushes swayed beneath a faery wind.  
The thrush ceased its singing, a mist crept about;  
We two clung together—with the world shut out.

## ETHNA CARBERY

Beyond the ghostly mist I could hear my cattle low—  
The little cow from Ballina, clean as driven snow;  
The dun cow from Kerry, the roan from Inisheer,  
Oh, pitiful their calling—and his whispers in my ear!

His eyes were a fire, his words were a snare:  
I cried my mother's name, but no help was there.  
I made the blessed Sign; then he gave a dreary moan,  
A wisp of cloud went floating by, and I stood alone.

Running ever through my head, is an old-time rune:  
"Who meets the Love-Talker must weave her shroud  
soon."

My mother's face is furrowed with the salt tears that  
fall,  
But the kind eyes of my father are the saddest sight  
of all.

I have spun the fleecy lint, and now my wheel is still;  
The linen length is woven for my shroud fine and chill.  
I shall stretch me on the bed where a happy maid I lay—  
Pray for the soul of Mairé Og at dawning of the day!

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON ENGLAND, 1874—

Welcome now to one of the four outstanding intellects in the literary England of our age. Chesterton shines brilliantly in several fields—in essay, criticism, journalism, fiction, religion, philosophy, poetry. In philosophy and poetry he rises to the highest levels. For his philosophy we may turn to *Orthodoxy*, *Heretics*, *What's Wrong with the World*. Chesterton makes a loud protest against the evils in the world's industrial system, yet he has his own unique remedy for them. In his recent lecture-visit to America, he voiced his protest in this statement: "Capitalism is not defensible: it is inhuman, inefficient and insecure."

His prose sparkles with epigram and paradox: these illuminate his defense of medieval theology as well as his many social and literary studies.

For his poetry we may turn to *The Wild Knight and Other Poems* and to *The Ballad of the White Horse*. In his ballads, such as *Lepanto*, he has revived the simplicity and crashing onrush of the old balladry. I begin this selection with one of the most remarkable short poems in the world. It thrills us with the unexpected. I dare to believe it one of the deathless things.

### *The Donkey*

THE tattered outlaw of the earth,  
Of ancient crooked will;  
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,  
I keep my secret still.

# GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

Fools! For I also had my hour;  
One far fierce hour and sweet:  
There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet.

## *A Prayer in Darkness*

THIS much, O heaven—if I should brood or  
rave,  
Pity me not; but let the world be fed,  
Yea, in my madness if I strike me dead,  
Heed you the grass that grows upon my grave.

If I dare snarl between this sun and sod,  
Whimper and clamor, give me grace to own,  
In sun and rain and fruit in season shown,  
The shining silence of the scorn of God.

Thank God the stars are set beyond my power:  
If I must travail in a night of wrath,  
Thank God my tears will never vex a moth,  
Nor any curse of mine cut down a flower.

Men say the sun was darkened; yet I had  
Thought it beat brightly, even on—Calvary;  
And He that hung upon the Torturing Tree  
Heard all the crickets singing, and was glad.

# GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

## *From "The Ballad of the White Horse"*

UP over windy wastes and up  
Went Alfred over the shaws,  
Shaken of the joy of giants,  
The joy without a cause.

In the slopes away to the western bays,  
Where blows not ever a tree,  
He washed his soul in the west wind  
And his body in the sea.

And he set to rhyme his ale-measures  
And he sang aloud his laws;  
Because of the joy of the giants,  
The joy without a cause.

For the King went gathering Wessex men  
As grain out of the chaff:  
The few that were alive to die,  
Laughing, as littered skulls that lie  
After lost battles turn to the sky  
An everlasting laugh.

The King went gathering Christian men  
As wheat out of the husk—  
Eldred the Franklin by the sea,  
And Mark, the man from Italy,  
And Golan of the Sacred Tree,  
From the old tribe on Usk.

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

The rooks croaked homeward heavily,  
    The west was clear and warm;  
The smoke of evening food and ease  
Rose like a blue tree in the trees  
    When he came to Eldred's farm.

But Eldred's farm was fallen awry,  
    Like an old cripple's bones,  
And Eldred's tools were red with rust;  
And on his well was a green crust,  
    And purple thistles upward thrust  
        Between the kitchen stones.

But smoke of some good feasting  
    Went upwards evermore,  
And Eldred's doors stood wide apart  
For loitering foot or laboring cart;  
And Eldred's great and foolish heart  
    Stood open, like his door.

A mighty man was Eldred,  
    A bulk for casks to fill;  
His face a dreaming furnace,  
    His body a walking hill.

In the old wars of Wessex  
    His sword had sunken deep,  
But all his friends, he sighed and said,  
Were broken about Ethelred;  
And between the deep drink and the dead  
    He had fallen upon sleep.

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

"Come not to me, King Alfred,  
Save always for the ale:  
Why should my harmless hinds be slain  
Because the chiefs cry once again,  
As in all fights, that we shall gain,  
And in all fights we fail.

"Your scalds still thunder and prophesy  
That crown that never comes:  
Friend, I will watch the certain things,  
Swine, and slow moons like silver rings,  
And the ripening of the plums."

### *From "Lepanto"*

*Louis Untermeyer calls attention to the fact that "Lepanto" anticipates the banging, clanging verses of "The Congo" by Vachel Lindsay. He goes on to say: "It is interesting to see how the syllables beat as if on brass. It is thrilling to feel how, in one's pulses, the armies sing, the feet tramp, the drums snort, and all the tides of marching crusaders roll out of lines like these:*

*'Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,  
Don John of Austria is going to the war:  
Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold,  
In the gloom-black purple, in the glint of old-gold:  
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,  
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon,  
and he comes.'*

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

WHITE founts falling in the Courts of the sun,  
And the Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they  
run;  
There is laughter like the fountains in that face of all  
men feared,  
It stirs the forest darkness, the darkness of his beard;  
It curls the blood-red crescent, the crescent of his lips;  
For the inmost sea of all the earth is shaken with his  
ships.  
They have dared the white republics up the capes of  
Italy,  
They have dashed the Adriatic round the Lion of the  
Sea,  
And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and  
loss,  
And called the kings of Christendom for swords about  
the Cross.  
The cold queen of England is looking in the glass;  
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass;  
From evening isles fantastical rings faint the Spanish  
gun,  
And the Lord upon the Golden Horn is laughing in the  
sun.

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,  
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has  
stirred,  
Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half attainted  
stall,  
The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,  
The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird has  
sung,  
That once went singing southward when all the world  
was young.  
In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,

Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.  
 Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,  
 Don John of Austria is going to the war,  
 Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold  
 In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,  
 Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,  
 Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon,  
 and he comes.

Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,  
 Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,  
 Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.  
 Love-light of Spain—hurrah!  
 Death-light of Africa!  
 Don John of Austria  
 Is riding to the sea.

Mahound is in his paradise above the evening star,  
*(Don John of Austria is going to the war.)*  
 He moves a mighty turban on the timeless houri's knees,  
 His turban that is woven of the sunsets and the seas.  
 He shakes the peacock gardens as he rises from his ease,  
 And he strides among the tree-tops and is taller than  
 the trees;  
 And his voice through all the garden is a thunder sent  
 to bring  
 Black Azrael and Ariel and Ammon on the wing.  
 Giants and the Genii,  
 Multiplex of wing and eye,  
 Whose strong obedience broke the sky  
 When Solomon was king. . . .

They rush in red and purple from the red clouds of  
 the morn,  
 From the temples where the yellow gods shut up their  
 eyes in scorn;

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

They rise in green robes roaring from the green hells  
of the sea  
Where fallen skies and evil hues and eyeless creatures  
be:  
On them the sea-valves cluster and the grey sea-forests  
curl,  
Splashed with a splendid sickness, the sickness of the  
pearl;  
They swell in sapphire smoke out of the blue cracks of  
the ground:  
They gather and they wonder and give worship to  
Mahound.  
And he saith, "Break up the mountains where the her-  
mit-folk can hide,  
And sift the red and silver sands lest bone of saint abide,  
And chase the Giaours flying night and day, not giving  
rest,  
For that which was our trouble comes again out of the  
west.  
We have set the seal of Solomon on all things under sun,  
Of knowledge and of sorrow and endurance of things  
done.  
But a noise is in the mountains, in the mountains, and I  
know  
The voice that shook our palaces—four hundred years  
ago:  
It is he that saith not 'Kismet'; it is he that knows not  
Fate;  
It is Richard, it is Raymond, it is Godfrey at the gate!  
It is he whose loss is laughter when he counts the wager  
worth:  
Put down your feet upon him, that our peace be on the  
earth."  
For he heard drums groaning and he heard guns jar,  
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

Sudden and still—hurrah!

Bolt from Iberia!

Don John of Austria

Is gone by Alcalar.

St. Michael's on his Mountain in the sea-roads of the north

*(Don John of Austria is girt and going forth.)*

Where the grey seas glitter and the sharp tides shift

And the sea-folk labor and the red sails lift.

He shakes his lance of iron and he claps his wings of stone;

The noise is gone through Normandy; the noise is gone alone;

The North is full of tangled things and texts and aching eyes,

And dead is all the innocence of anger and surprise,  
And Christian killeth Christian in a narrow dusty room,  
And Christian dreadeth Christ that hath a newer face of doom,

And Christian hateth Mary that God kissed in Galilee—  
But Don John of Austria is riding to the sea.

Don John calling through the blast and the eclipse  
Crying with the trumpet, with the trumpet of his lips,  
Trumpet that sayeth *ha!*

*Domino gloria!*

Don John of Austria

Is shouting to the ships.

King Philip's in his closet with the Fleece about his neck

*(Don John of Austria is armed upon the deck.)*

The walls are hung with velvet that is black and soft as sin,

And little dwarfs creep out of it and little dwarfs creep in.

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

He holds a crystal phial that has colors like the moon,  
He touches, and it tingles, and he trembles very soon,  
And his face is as a fungus of a leprous white and grey  
Like plants in the high houses that are shuttered from  
the day,

And death is in the phial and the end of noble work,  
But Don John of Austria has fired upon the Turk.

Don John's hunting, and his hounds have bayed—  
Booms away past Italy, the rumor of his raid.

Gun upon gun, ha! ha!

Gun upon gun, hurrah!

Don John of Austria

Has loosed the cannonade.

The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke,  
(*Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.*)

The hidden room in man's house where God sits all the  
year,

The secret window whence the world looks small and  
very dear.

He sees as in a mirror on the monstrous twilight sea  
The crescent of his cruel ships whose name is mystery:  
They fling great shadows foe-wards, making Cross and  
Castle dark,

They veil the plumèd lions on the galleys of St. Mark;  
And above the ships are palaces of brown, black-bearded  
chiefs,

And below the ships are prisons, where with multitudi-  
nous griefs,

Christian captives sick and sunless, all a laboring race  
repines

Like a race in sunken cities, like a nation in the mines.

They are lost like slaves that sweat, and in the skies of  
morning hung

## GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

The stair-ways of the tallest gods when tyranny was young.

They are countless, voiceless, hopeless as those fallen or fleeing on

Before the high Kings' horses in the granite of Babylon.

And many a one grows witless in his quiet room in hell

Where a yellow face looks inward through the lattice of his cell,

And he finds his God forgotten, and he seeks no more a sign—

(*But Don John of Austria has burst the battle-line!*)

Don John pounding from the slaughter-painted poop,

Purpling all the ocean like a bloody pirate's sloop,

Scarlet running over on the silvers and the golds,

Breaking of the hatches up and bursting of the holds,

Thronging of the thousands up that labor under sea

White for bliss and blind for sun and stunned for liberty.

*Vivat Hispania!*

*Domino Gloria!*

Don John of Austria

Has set his people free!

Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath

(*Don John of Austria rides homeward with a wreath.*)

And he sees across a weary land a straggling road in Spain,

Up which a lean and foolish knight for ever rides in vain;

And he smiles, but not as Sultans smile, and settles back the blade. . . .

(*But Don John of Austria rides home from the Crusade.*)

## JOHN MASEFIELD

ENGLAND, 1874—

THIS remarkable poet has seen life in its dregs and dust-heaps. At one time, he was a common sailor: at another time, he was a dish-washer and sweeper in Luke O'Connor's old saloon in New York City. Many of his poems reek with the realism of the brutality on the lower levels. He rose into international fame with the publication of the great poems, *The Everlasting Mercy*, *Dauber*, and *The Widow in the Bye Street*. In these, he pictures the rejected and the humbled; and he rises sometimes to a piercing pathos, sometimes to a religious passion. We have no record of a more remarkable career in the history of poetic genius.

Masefield once spoke to me of my poem, *The Man with the Hoe*; and he went on to say that, in this desperate world, there is little worth writing about except the destitute and disinherited millions down in the abyss of civilization. Read his masterly poem, *A Consecration*. But I will open my selection with two of the best love lyrics ever written by the pen of a poet.

### *Her Heart*

HER heart is always doing lovely things,  
Filling my wintry mind with simple flowers;  
Playing sweet tunes on my untunèd strings,  
Delighting all my undelightful hours,

## JOHN MASEFIELD

She plays me like a lute, what tune she will,  
    No string in me but trembles at her touch,  
Shakes into sacred music, or is still,  
    Trembles or stops, or swells, her skill is such.

And in the dusty taverns of my soul  
    Where filthy lusts drink witches' brew for wine,  
Her gentle hand still keeps me from the bowl,  
    Still keeps me man, saves me from being swine.

All grace in me, all sweetness in my verse,  
Is hers, is my dear girl's, and only hers.

JOHN MASEFIELD

*Being Her Friend*

**B**EING her friend, I do not care, not I,  
How gods or men may wrong me, beat me  
down:  
Her word's sufficient star to travel by,  
I count her quiet praise sufficient crown.

Being her friend, I do not covet gold,  
Save for a royal gift to give her pleasure:  
To sit with her, and have her hand to hold,  
Is wealth, I think, surpassing minted treasure.

Being her friend, I only covet art,  
A white pure flame to search me as I trace  
In crookèd letters from a throbbing heart  
The hymn to beauty written on her face.

# JOHN MASEFIELD

## *Sea-Fever*

I MUST go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea  
and the sky;  
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,  
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white  
sail's shaking,  
And a gray mist on the sea's face and a gray dawn  
breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the  
running tide  
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;  
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds  
flying,  
And the flung spray and the blown spume and the sea-  
gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy  
life,  
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's  
like a whetted knife;  
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-  
rover,  
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's  
over.

*On Growing Old*

I

**B**E with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying,  
My dog and I are old, too old for roving:  
Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift flying,  
Is soon too lame to march, too cold for loving.  
I take the book and gather to the fire,  
Turning old yellow leaves. Minute by minute  
The clock ticks to my heart; a withered wire  
Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet.

I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander  
Your mountains, nor your downlands, nor your  
valleys,  
Ever again, nor share the battle yonder  
Where your young knight the broken squadron rallies;  
Only stay quiet, while my mind remembers  
The beauty of fire from the beauty of embers.

II

Beauty, have pity; for the young have power,  
The rich their wealth, the beautiful their grace,  
Summer of man its fruit-time and its flower,  
Spring-time of man all April in a face.  
Only, as in the jostling in the Strand,  
Where the mob thrusts, or loiters, or is loud,  
The beggar with the saucer in his hand  
Asks only a penny from the passing crowd.

## JOHN MASEFIELD

So, from this glittering world with all its fashion,  
Its fire and play of men, its stir, its march,  
Let me have wisdom, Beauty, wisdom and passion,  
Bread to the soul, rain where the summers parch.  
Give me but these, and though the darkness close,  
Even the night will blossom as the rose.

### *Cargoes*

QUINQUIREME of Nineveh from distant Ophir,  
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,  
With a cargo of ivory,  
And apes and peacocks,  
Sandalwood, cedarwood and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus  
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,  
With a cargo of diamonds,  
Emeralds, amethysts,  
Topazes, and cinnamon and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack,  
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,  
With a cargo of Tyne coal,  
Road-rails, pig-lead,  
Firewood, iron-ware and cheap tin trays.

*A Consecration*

**N**OT of the princes and prelates with periwigged  
charioteers  
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years,  
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in  
with the spears—

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,  
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries—  
The men with the broken heads and the blood running  
into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of the throne,  
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,  
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be  
known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the  
road,

The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with  
the goad,

The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load;

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the  
clout,

The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to  
the shout,

The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired lookout.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the  
mirth,

The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth—  
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of  
the earth!

## JOHN MASEFIELD

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the gold;  
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mould.  
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and  
the cold—  
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tale be told.  
Amen.

### C. L. M.

**I**N the dark womb where I began  
My mother's life made me a man.  
Through all the months of human birth  
Her beauty fed my common earth.  
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,  
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave  
She cannot see the life she gave.  
For all her love, she cannot tell  
Whether I use it ill or well,  
Nor knock at dusty doors to find  
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,  
She would not know her little son,  
I am so grown. If we should meet  
She would pass by me in the street,  
Unless my soul's face let her see  
My sense of what she did for me.

## JOHN MASEFIELD

What have I done to keep in mind  
My debt to her and womankind?  
What woman's happier life repays  
Her for those months of wretched days?  
For all my mouthless body leeched  
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reached?

What have I done, or tried, or said  
In thanks to that dear woman dead?  
Men triumph over women still,  
Men trample women's rights at will,  
And man's lust roves the world untamed. . . .  
O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

## GORDON BOTTOMLEY

ENGLAND, 1874—

AUTHOR of the successful drama, *King Lear's Wife*, Gordon Bottomley has in recent years written much that is worth preserving. Does the *New Year's Eve* poem which I include, breathe some of the wistful spirit of A. E. Housman?

### *Eager Spring*

WHIRL, snow, on the blackbird's chatter;  
You will not hinder his song to come.  
East wind, Sleepless, you cannot scatter  
Quince-bud, almond-bud,  
Little grape-hyacinth's  
Clustering brood,  
Nor unfurl the tips of the plum.  
No half born stalk of a lily stops;  
There is sap in the storm-torn bush;  
And, ruffled by gusts in a snow-blurred copse,  
"Pity to wait," sings a thrush.

Love, there are few Springs left for us:  
They go, and the count of them as they go  
Makes surer the count that is left for us.  
More than the East wind, more than the snow,  
I would put back these hours that bring  
Buds and bees and are lost:  
I would hold the night and the frost,  
To save for us one more Spring.

*New Year's Eve, 1913*

O CARTMEL bells ring soft tonight,  
And Cartmel bells ring clear;  
But I lie far away tonight  
Listening with my dear;

Listening in a frosty land  
Where all the bells are still  
And the small-windowed bell-towers stand  
Dark under heath and hill.

I thought that, with each dying year,  
As long as life should last,  
The bells of Cartmel I should hear  
Ring out an aged past.

The plunging, mingling sounds increase  
Darkness's depth and height;  
The hollow valley gains more peace  
And ancientness tonight:

The loveliness, the fruitfulness,  
The power of life lived there  
Return, revive, more closely press  
Upon that midnight air.

But many deaths have place in men  
Before they come to die:  
Joys must be used and spent, and then  
Abandoned and passed by.

## GORDON BOTTOMLEY

Earth is not ours; no cherished space  
Can hold us from life's flow,  
That bears us thither and thence by ways  
We knew not we should go.

O Cartmel bells ring loud, ring clear,  
Through midnight deep and hoar,  
A year new-born, and I shall hear  
The Cartmel bells no more.

## EDWARD THOMAS

ENGLAND, 1878—1917

THOMAS was both proseman and poet. He wrote a highly interesting volume on Swinburne. As a poet, he frequently deals with the unconsidered trifles of the world, giving to them an unexpected dignity. He fell at Arras, one of the many brilliant young men who were sacrifices of the World War.

### *Gallows*

HERE was a weasel lived in the sun  
With all his family,  
Till a keeper shot him with his gun  
And hung him up on a tree,  
Where he swings in the wind and rain  
In the sun and in the snow,  
Without pleasure, without pain  
On the dead oak tree bough.

There was a crow who was no sleeper,  
But a thief and a murderer  
Till a very late hour; and this keeper  
Made him one of the things that were,  
To hang and flap in rain and wind.  
In the sun and in the snow.  
There are no more sins to be sinned  
On the dead oak tree bough.

## EDWARD THOMAS

There was a magpie, too,  
Had a long tongue and a long tail;  
He could both talk and do—  
But what did that avail?  
He, too, flaps in the wind and rain  
Alongside weasel and crow,  
Without pleasure, without pain,  
On the dead oak tree bough.

And many other beasts  
And birds, skin, bone and feather,  
Have been taken from their feasts  
And hung up there together,  
To swing and have endless leisure  
In the sun and in the snow,  
Without pain, without pleasure,  
On the dead oak tree bough.

### *The Unknown*

**S**HE is most fair,  
And when they see her pass  
The poets' ladies  
Look no more in the glass,  
But after her.

On a bleak moor  
Running under the moon  
She lures a poet,  
Once proud or happy, soon  
Far from his door.

## EDWARD THOMAS

Beside a train,  
Because they saw her go,  
Or failed to see her,  
Travellers and watchers know  
Another pain.

The simple lack  
Of her is more to me  
Than others' presence,  
Whether life splendid be  
Or utter black.

I have not seen,  
I have no news of her;  
I can tell only  
She is not here, but there  
She might have been.

She is to be kissed  
Only perhaps by me;  
She may be seeking  
Me and no other: she  
May not exist.

*Sowing*

IT was a perfect day  
For sowing; just  
As sweet and dry was the ground  
As tobacco-dust.

I tasted deep the hour  
Between the far  
Owl's chuckling first soft cry  
And the first star.

A long stretched hour it was;  
Nothing undone  
Remained; the early seeds  
All safely sown.

And now, hark at the rain,  
Windless and light,  
Half a kiss, half a tear,  
Saying good-night.

## LORD DUNSANY

IRELAND, 1878—

DUNSANY has a dramatic intensity that rises sometimes into weird phantasy, sometimes into strange symbolism. Nearly all of his tales and poems are touched with an unearthly light.

### *Songs from an Evil Wood*

#### I

SOMEWHERE lost in the haze  
The sun goes down in the cold,  
And birds in this evil wood  
Chirrup home as of old;

Chirrup, stir and are still,  
On the high twigs frozen and thin.  
There is no more noise of them now,  
And the long night sets in.

Of all the wonderful things  
That I have seen in the wood,  
I marvel most at the birds  
And their wonderful quietude.

For a giant smites with his club  
All day the tops of the hill,  
Sometimes he rests at night,  
Oftener he beats them still.

Lord Dunstan  
And a dwarf with a grim black mane  
Raps with repeated rage  
All night in the valley below  
On the wooden walls of his cage.

II

I met with Death in his country,  
With his scythe and his hollow eye,  
Walking the roads of Belgium.  
I looked and he passed me by.

Since he passed me by in Plug Street,  
In the wood of the evil name,  
I shall not now lie with the heroes,  
I shall not share their fame;

I shall never be as they are,  
A name in the lands of the Free,  
Since I looked on Death in Flanders  
And he did not look at me.

LORD DUNSANY

*A Song of Wandering*

SOME crumpled-rose-leaf mountains, from forty miles away,  
Are luring me towards them through all the blazing day.  
Some crumpled-rose-leaf mountains flecked here and there with blue.  
They call to me and beckon as elfin hands might do.

And deeper pink beyond them a double summit towers,  
Like Chronos grave and weary above the younger Powers.

Behind me the Sahara, before—those barren crags.  
And with me the old hunter, illustrious in his rags.

When I am back in London, among the hoardings' blaze,  
And pictures of bad food and salt that men are paid to praise,

When, bright with lights that dim the stars, the foolish words are writ,  
To Crumpled-rose-leaf Mountain my thought will fly from it.

WILFRED GIBSON  
ENGLAND, 1878—

Two of his best volumes are *Stonefolds* and *Daily Bread*; and these names suggest his effort to come into a first-hand struggle with the grim realities in the life of the toiling millions. But he is best known by his brief ironic glimpses of the War—poems epigrammatic and terribly unforgettable.

*Lament*

WE who are left, how shall we look again  
Happily on the sun or feel the rain  
Without remembering how they who went  
Ungrudgingly and spent  
Their lives for us loved, too, the sun and the rain?

A bird among the rain-wet lilac sings—  
But we, how shall we turn to little things  
And listen to the birds and winds and streams  
Made holy by their dreams,  
Nor feel the heart-break in the heart of things?

## WILFRED GIBSON

### *Sight*

**B**Y the lamplit stall I loitered, feasting my eyes—  
On colors ripe and rich for the heart's desire—  
Tomatoes, redder than Krakatoa's fire,  
Oranges like old sunsets over Tyre,  
And apples golden-green as the glades of Paradise.

And as I lingered, lost in divine delight,  
My heart thanked God for the goodly gift of sight  
And all youth's lively senses keen and quick . . .  
When suddenly, behind me in the night,  
I heard the tapping of a blind man's stick.

### *The Return*

**H**E went, and he was gay to go:  
And I smiled on him as he went,  
My son—'twas well he couldn't know  
My darkest dread, nor what it meant—

Just what it meant to smile and smile  
And let my son go cheerily—  
My son . . . and wondering all the while  
What stranger would come back to me.

*Black*

THEY ask me where I've been,  
 And what I've done and seen.  
 But what can I reply?  
 Who know it wasn't I,  
 But some one just like me,  
 Who went across the sea  
 And with my head and hands  
 Killed men in foreign lands . . .  
 Though I must bear the blame  
 Because he bore my name.

*In the Ambulance*

TWO rows of cabbages,  
 Two of curly-greens,  
 Two rows of early peas,  
 Two of kidney beans."

That's what he is muttering,  
 Making such a song,  
 Keeping other chaps awake,  
 The whole night long.

Both his legs are shot away,  
 And his head is light;  
 So he keeps on muttering  
 All the blessed night:

## WILFRED GIBSON

"Two rows of cabbages,  
Two of curly-greens,  
Two rows of early peas,  
Two of kidney beans."

### *The Fowler*

**A** WILD bird filled the morning air  
With dewy-hearted song;  
I took it in a golden snare  
Of meshes close and strong.

But where is now the song I heard?  
For all my cunning art,  
I who would house a singing bird  
Have caged a broken heart.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN  
IRELAND, 1879—

*Praise*

DEAR, they are praising your beauty,  
The grass and the sky:  
The sky in a silence of wonder,  
The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,  
Dearest, had I  
Speech as the whispering grass,  
Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising  
Beauty so high.  
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,  
Sung in a sigh.

## HAROLD MONRO

ENGLAND, 1879—

THE poet Monro is the head of the famous Poetry Bookshop of London. He has edited the yearly volumes of *The Georgian Anthology*, containing the latest work of the younger British poets. You will be struck by the surprising originality of *Strange Meetings*.

### *Strange Meetings*

IF suddenly a clod of earth should rise,  
And walk about, and breathe, and speak, and love,  
How one would tremble, and in what surprise  
Gasp: "Can you move?"

I see men walking, and I always feel:  
"Earth! How have you done this? What can you be?"  
I can't learn how to know men, or conceal  
How strange they are to me.

## HAROLD MONRO

### *The Nightingale Near the House*

**H**ERE is the soundless cypress on the lawn;  
It listens, listens. Taller trees beyond  
Listen. The moon at the unruffled pond  
Stares. And you sing, you sing.

That star-enchanted song falls through the air  
From lawn to lawn down terraces of sound,  
Darts in white arrows on the shadowed ground;  
And all the night you sing.

My dreams are flowers to which you are a bee  
As all night long I listen, and my brain  
Receives your song; then loses it again  
In moonlight on the lawn.

Now is your voice a marble high and white,  
Then like a mist on fields of paradise,  
Now is a raging fire, then is like ice,  
Then breaks, and it is dawn.

### *Youth in Arms*

**H**APPY boy, happy boy,  
David the immortal-willed,  
Youth a thousand times  
Slain, but not once killed,  
Swaggering again to-day  
In the old contemptuous way;

## HAROLD MONRO

Leaning backward from your thigh  
Up against the tinselled bar—  
Lust and ashes! is it you?  
Laughing, boasting, there you are!  
First we hardly recognized you  
In your modern avatar.

Soldier, rifle, brown khaki—  
Is your blood as happy so?  
Where's your sling or painted shield,  
Helmet, or your pike, or bow?  
Well, you're going to the wars—  
That is all you need to know.

Graybeards plotted. They were sad.  
Death was in their wrinkled eyes.  
At their tables—with their maps,  
Plans and calculations—wise  
They all seemed; for well they knew  
How ungrudgingly Youth dies.

At their green official baize  
They debated all the night  
Plans for your adventurous days  
Which you followed with delight,  
Youth in all your wanderings,  
David of a thousand slings.

*Impressions*

**H**E'S something in the city. Who shall say  
His fortune was not honorably won?  
Few people can afford to give away  
As he, or help the poor as he has done.

Neat in his habits, temperate in his life:  
Oh, who shall dare his character besmirch?  
He scarcely ever quarrels with his wife,  
And every Sabbath strictly goes to church.

He helps the village club, and in the town  
Attends parochial meetings once a week,  
Pays for each purchase ready-money down:  
Is anyone against him?—Who will speak?

There is a widow somewhere in the north,  
On whom slow ruin gradually fell,  
While she, believing that her God was wroth,  
Suffered without a word—or she might tell.

And there's a beggar somewhere in the west,  
Whose fortune vanished gradually away:  
Now he but drags his limbs in horror lest  
Starvation feed on them—or he might say.

And there are children stricken with disease,  
Too ignorant to curse him, or too weak.  
In a true portrait of him all of these  
Must figure in the background—they shall speak.

## ALFRED NOYES

ENGLAND, 1880—

WINNING the approbation of Swinburne with his first volume, *The Loom of Years* (1902), Alfred Noyes stood on the threshold of his great career. Noyes is an Oxford man: a few years ago he was appointed Professor of Modern English at Princeton University. He is a critic as well as a poet. In *Some Aspects of Modern Poetry*, he has recently given us a highly interesting volume. I don't always find myself in absolute alignment with his opinions—see his comment on *The Raven*, Poe's remarkable masterpiece. Yet you will find in the volume a rich confession of literary opinion—a reasoned and seasoned defense of some of the great verities—some of the old (often forgotten) ideals of literature and life.

His poetry displays his keen interest in the panorama of the present and the romance of the past; and it is frequently expressed in lyric and ballad, sweeping on in flashing phrases, in dancing and prancing rhythms. What ease, what heartiness, what gusto! Many of his lines have gone singing into the ear of the world.

One critic flings out this pleasantry: "People have such a good time reading his vivacious lines, because Noyes had such a good time writing them. Rhyme in a thumping rhythm seems to be not merely his trade, but his morning exercise."

His best and most representative work is in glees and catches like *Forty Singing Seamen*, the lusty choruses in *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*, the inspired whimsicality of *The Forest of Wild Thyme* and passages in *Sherwood*. His best sustained performance is *Drake*, an epic in twelve books of blank verse. Noyes has nearly a dozen volumes of verse to his credit. His *Collected Poems* in two volumes were published in 1913.

*The Highwayman*

*This justly famous ballad is characterized by swift action, ringing music and the indefinable magic of atmosphere that evokes the romantic swashbuckling past of Merry England.*

PART ONE

I

THE wind was a torrent of darkness among the  
gusty trees,  
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,  
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple  
moor,  
And the highwayman came riding—  
Riding—riding—  
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

II

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of  
lace at his chin,  
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-  
skin:  
They fitted with never a wrinkle; his boots were up to  
the thigh!  
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,  
His pistol butts a-twinkle,  
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

## ALFRED NOYES

III

IV

V

## ALFRED NOYES

## PART TWO

1

11

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale  
instead;  
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot  
of her narrow bed.  
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at  
the side!

## ALFRED NOYES

There was death at every window;  
And Hell at one dark window;  
For Bess could see, through her casement, the road  
that *he* would ride.

### III

They had tied her up to attention, with many a snig-  
gering jest:  
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel  
beneath her breast!  
"Now keep good watch!" and they kissed her.  
She heard the dead man say—  
*Look for me by moonlight;*  
*Watch for me by moonlight;*  
*I'll come to thee by moonlight, though Hell should bar*  
*the way!*

### IV

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held  
good!  
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with  
sweat or blood!  
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the  
hours crawled by like years;  
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,  
                  Cold, on the stroke of midnight,  
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least  
was hers!

### V

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for  
the rest!  
Up, she stood to attention, with the barrel beneath her  
breast,

## ALFRED NOYES

She would not risk their hearing: she would not strive again;  
For the road lay bare in the moonlight,  
                          Blank and bare in the moonlight;  
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed  
                          to her Love's refrain.

### VI

*Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot!* Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear—  
*Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot* in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?  
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,  
The highwayman came riding,  
                          Riding, riding!  
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up straight and still!

### VII

*Tlot-tlot*, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot* in the echoing night!  
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!  
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,  
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,  
                          Her musket shattered the moonlight,  
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him  
                          —with her death.

# ALFRED NOYES

## VIII

He turned; he spurred him Westward; he did not know  
    who stood  
Bowed with her head o'er the musket, drenched with  
    her own red blood!  
Not till the dawn he heard it, and slowly blanched to  
    hear  
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,  
    The landlord's black-eyed daughter,  
Had watched for her Love in the moonlight, and died  
    in the darkness there.

## IX

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the  
    sky,  
With the white road smoking behind him, and his rapier  
    brandished high!  
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-red  
    was his velvet coat;  
When they shot him down on the highway,  
    Down like a dog on the highway,  
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch  
    of lace at his throat.

\* \* \* \* \*

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is  
    in the trees,  
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy  
    seas,  
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple  
    moor,*

## ALFRED NOYES

*A highwayman comes riding—*

*Riding—riding—*

*A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.*

### X

*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;*

*And he taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred:*

*He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there*

*But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,*

*Bess, the landlord's daughter,*

*Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.*

*Sherwood*

**S**HERWOOD in the twilight, is Robin Hood awake?  
Grey and ghostly shadows are gliding through the  
brake;

Shadows of the dappled deer, dreaming of the morn,  
Dreaming of a shadowy man that winds a shadowy horn.

Robin Hood is here again: all his merry thieves  
Hear a ghostly bugle-note shivering through the leaves,  
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,  
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Merry, merry England has kissed the lips of June:  
All the wings of fairyland were here beneath the moon,  
Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist  
Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Merry, merry England is waking as of old,  
With eyes of blither hazel and hair of brighter gold;  
For Robin Hood is here again beneath the bursting spray  
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Love is in the greenwood building him a house  
Of wild rose and hawthorn and honeysuckle boughs:  
Love is in the greenwood, dawn is in the skies,  
And Marian is waiting with a glory in her eyes.

Hark! The dazzled laverock climbs the golden steep:  
Marian is waiting; is Robin Hood asleep?  
Round the fairy grass-rings frolic elf and fay,  
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

## ALFRED NOYES

Oberon, Oberon, rake away the gold,  
Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mold,  
Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,  
And wake Will Scarlett from his leafy forest bed.

Friar Tuck and Little John are riding down together  
With quarter-staff and drinking-can and grey goose-  
feather:  
The dead are coming back again; the years are rolled  
away  
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Softly over Sherwood the south wind blows;  
All the heart of England hid in every rose  
Hears across the greenwood the sunny whisper leap,  
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Hark, the voice of England wakes him as of old  
And, shattering the silence with a cry of brighter gold,  
Bugles in the greenwood echo from the steep,  
*Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?*

Where the deer are gliding down the shadowy glen,  
All across the glades of fern he calls his merry men;  
Doublets of the Lincoln green glancing through the May,  
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day;

Calls them and they answer: from aisles of oak and ash  
Rings the *Follow! Follow!* and the boughs begin to  
crash;  
The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly,  
And through the crimson dawning the robber band  
goes by.

## ALFRED NOYES

*Robin! Robin! Robin!* All his merry thieves  
Answer as the bugle-note shivers through the leaves;  
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,  
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

### *The Barrel-Organ*

**T**HREE'S a barrel-organ carolling across a golden  
street  
In the City as the sun sinks low;  
And the music's not immortal, but the world has made  
it sweet  
And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;  
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the  
pain  
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal  
light;  
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again  
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And now it's marching onward through the realms of  
old romance,  
And trolling out a fond familiar tune;  
And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the King of  
France,  
And now it's prattling softly to the moon.  
And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore  
Of human joys and wonders and regrets;  
To remember and to recompense the music evermore  
For what the cold machinery forgets . . .

## ALFRED NOYES

Yes; as the music changes,  
Like a prismatic glass,  
It takes the light and ranges  
Through all the moods that pass;  
Dissects the common carnival  
Of passions and regrets,  
And gives the world a glimpse of all  
The colors it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs  
Another sadder song;  
And there *Il Trovatore* cries  
A tale of deeper wrong;  
And bolder knights to battle go  
With sword and shield and lance,  
Than ever here on earth below  
Have whirled into—a dance!—

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;  
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)  
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;  
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume  
and sweet perfume,  
The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to London!)  
And there they say, when dawn is high and all the world's a blaze of sky  
The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

## ALFRED NOYES

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say you'll  
hear him there  
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to  
London!)  
The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the  
long halloo  
And golden-eyed *tu-whit, tu-whoo* of owls that ogle  
London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't  
heard  
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to  
London!)  
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut  
spires are out  
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing  
for London.

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-  
time;*  
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from  
London!)*  
*And you shall wander hand in hand with love in sum-  
mer's wonderland;*  
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from  
London!)*

And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden  
street,  
In the city as the sun sinks low;  
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary  
feet  
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,

## ALFRED NOYES

And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll  
never meet,  
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the pop-  
pies and the wheat,  
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you  
dream

Of the City when the sun sinks low,  
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-colored  
stream  
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that  
seem  
To be litten for a moment with a wild Italian gleam  
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme  
And pulses with the sunset-glow?

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of  
frozen stone

In the City as the sun sinks low:  
There's a portly man of business with a balance of his  
own,  
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft reposeful  
tone,  
And they're all of them returning to the heavens they  
have known:  
They are crammed and jammed in busses and—they're  
each of them alone  
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a laborer that listens to the voices of the dead  
In the City as the sun sinks low;  
And his hand begins to tremble and his face is rather  
red

## ALFRED NOYES

As he sees a loafer watching him and—there he turns  
his head

And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,  
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul is led  
Through the land where the dead dreams go . . .

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street  
In the City as the sun sinks low;

Though the music's only Verdi there's a world to make  
it sweet

Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven  
meet

Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thou-  
sand feet

Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the  
wheat

In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,

What have you to say

When you meet the garland girls

Tripping on their way?

All around my gala hat

I wear a wreath of roses

(A long and lonely year it is

I've waited for the May!)

If any one should ask you,

The reason why I wear it is—

My own love, my true love is coming  
home to-day.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady

*(It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!)*

Buy a bunch of violets for the lady;

While the sky burns blue above.

## ALFRED NOYES

On the other side the street you'll find it shady  
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)  
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,  
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street  
In the City as the sun sinks glittering and slow;  
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made  
it sweet  
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song  
complete  
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and  
morning meet,  
As it dies into the sunset glow;  
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the  
pain  
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal  
light;  
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again  
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,  
The song runs round again:  
Once more it turns and ranges  
Through all its joy and pain;  
Dissects the common carnival  
Of passions and regrets;  
And the wheeling world remembers all  
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs  
Another sadder song:  
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries  
A tale of deeper wrong;

## ALFRED NOYES

Once more the knights to battle go  
With sword and shield and lance  
Till once, once more, the shattered foe  
Has whirled into—a dance!

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;*

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)*

*And you shall wander hand in hand with Love in summer's wonderland,*

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)*

## Forty Singing Seamen

*"In our lande be Beeres and Lyons of dyvers colours as ye redd, grene, black and white. And in our land be also unicorns and these Unicorns slee many Lyons. . . . Also there dare no man make a lye in our lande, for if he dyde he sholde incontynent be sleyn."*

—Mediæval Epistle of Pope Prester John.

### I

**A**CROSS the seas of Wonderland to Mogadore we plodded,  
Forty singing seamen in an old black barque,  
And we landed in the twilight where a Polyphemus nodded  
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow through the dark!

# ALFRED NOYES

For his eye was growing mellow,  
Rich and ripe and red and yellow,  
As was time, since old Ulysses made him bellow in  
the dark!

*Cho.*—Since Ulysses bunged his eye up with a pine-  
torch in the dark!

## II

Were they mountains in the gloaming or the giant's  
ugly shoulders

Just beneath the rolling eye-ball, with its bleared  
and vinous glow,  
Red and yellow o'er the purple of the pines among  
the boulders

And the shaggy horror brooding on the sullen slopes  
below,

*W*ere they pines among the boulders  
Or the hair upon his shoulders?

We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't  
know.

*Cho.*—We were simple singing seamen, so of course  
we couldn't know.

## III

But we crossed a plain of poppies, and we came upon  
a fountain

Not of water, but of jewels, like a spray of leaping  
fire;

And behind it, in an emerald glade, beneath a golden  
mountain

There stood a crystal palace, for a sailor to admire;  
For a troop of ghosts came round us,  
Which with leaves of bay they crowned us,

## ALFRED NOYES

Then with grog they well-nigh drowned us, to the  
depth of our desire!

*Cho.*—And 'twas very friendly of them, as a sailor  
can admire!

### IV

There was music all about us, we were growing quite  
forgetful

We were only singing seamen from the dirt of Lon-  
don-town,

Though the nectar that we swallowed seemed to vanish  
half regretful

As if we wasn't good enough to take such vittles  
down,

When we saw a sudden figure,

Tall and black as any nigger,

Like the devil—only bigger—drawing near us with  
a frown!

*Cho.*—Like the devil—but much bigger—and he wore  
a golden crown!

### V

And "What's all this?" he growls at us! With dignity  
we chaunted,

"Forty singing seamen, sir, as won't be put upon!"

"What? Englishmen?" he cries. "Well, if ye don't  
mind being haunted,

Faith, you're welcome to my palace; I'm the famous  
Prester John!

Will ye walk into my palace?

I don't bear 'ee any malice!

One and all ye shall be welcome in the halls of  
Prester John!"

*Cho.*—So we walked into the palace and the halls of  
Prester John!

Now the door was one great diamond and the hall a hollow ruby—

Big as Beachy Head, my lads, nay bigger by a half!  
And I sees the mate wi' mouth agape, a-staring like a booby

And the skipper close behind him, with his tongue out like a calf!

Now the way to take it rightly  
Was to walk along politely

Just as if you didn't notice—so I couldn't help but laugh!

*Cho.*—For they both forgot their manners and the crew was bound to laugh!

But he took us through his palace and, my lads, as I'm a sinner,

We walked into an opal like a sunset-colored cloud—  
“My dining room,” he says, and, quick as light we saw a dinner

Spread before us by the fingers of a hidden fairy crowd;

And the skipper, swaying gently  
After dinner, murmurs faintly,

“I looks to-wards you, Prester John, you've done us very proud!”

*Cho.*—And we drank his health with honors, for he done us very proud!

## ALFRED NOYES

### VIII

Then he walks us to his garden where we sees a  
feathered demon  
Very splendid and important on a sort of spicy tree!  
"That's the Phœnix," whispers Prester, "which all eddi-  
cated seamen  
Knows the only one existent, and *he's* waiting for to  
flee!  
When his hundred years expire  
Then he'll set hisself a-fire  
And another from his ashes rise most beautiful to see!"  
*Cho.*—With wings of rose and emerald most beautiful  
to see!

### IX

Then he says, "In yonder forest there's a little silver  
river  
And whosoever drinks of it, his youth shall never die!  
The centuries go by, but Prester John endures for ever  
With his music in the mountains and his magic on  
the sky!  
While *your* hearts are growing colder,  
While your world is growing older,  
There's a magic in the distance, where the sealine  
meets the sky."  
*Cho.*—It shall call to singing seamen till the fount o'  
song is dry!

### X

So we thought we'd up and seek it, but that forest  
fair defied us—  
First a crimson leopard laughs at us most horrible  
to see,

# ALFRED NOYES

Then a sea-green lion came and sniffed and licked his  
chops and eyed us,  
While a red and yellow unicorn was dancing round  
a tree!  
We was trying to look thinner,  
Which was hard, because our dinner  
Must ha' made us very tempting to a cat o' high  
degree!  
*Cho.*—Must ha' made us very tempting to the whole  
menarjeree!

## xi

So we scuttled from that forest and across the poppy-  
meadows  
Where the awful shaggy horror brooded o'er us in  
the dark!  
And we pushes out from shore again a-jumping at our  
shadows  
And pulls away most joyful to the old black barque!  
And home again we plodded  
While the Polyphemus nodded  
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow  
through the dark.  
*Cho.*—Oh, the moon above the mountains, red and  
yellow through the dark!

# ALFRED NOYES

## xii

Across the seas of Wonderland to London-town we blundered,

Forty singing seamen as was puzzled for to know  
If the visions that we saw was caused by—here again  
we pondered—

A tipple in a vision forty thousand years ago.

Could the grog we *dreamt* we swallowed  
Make us *dream* of all that followed?

We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't know!

*Cho.*—We were simple singing seamen, so of course we could not know!

### *The Outlaw*

*"I banish you."*—*Corialanus to the Romans.*

DEEP in the greenwood of my heart  
Is my abiding-place:  
I cloak my soul at feast and mart;  
I mask my face.

Outlawed—but not alone—for Truth  
Is outlawed too.

You cannot banish us, proud world:  
We banish you.

Go by, go by, with all your din,  
Your dust, your greed, your guile,  
Your pomp, your gold; you cannot win  
From her one smile.

## ALFRED NOYES

She sings to me in a lonely place,  
She takes my trembling hand;  
I gaze into her lovely face,  
And understand.

Outlawed—but not alone—for Love  
Is outlawed too.  
You cannot banish us, proud world:  
We banish you.

Now which is outcast, which alone?  
Around us fall and rise  
Murmurs of leaf and fern, the moan  
Of paradise.

Outlawed? Then hills and glens and streams  
Are outlawed too.  
Proud world, from our immortal dreams,  
We banish you.

## PADRAIC COLUM

IRELAND, 1881—

COLUM was one of the group that gave form to the Irish National Theater; and he is now a recognized force in the progressive poetry movement in America. *Wild Earth*, republished with amplification in 1916, contains his most important poems. They smell of the turf and the plowed ground, and they express the heart of simple, wistful people. He has written several plays and a number of juvenile works of great imaginative charm.

### *An Old Woman of the Roads*

O TO have a little house!  
To own the hearth and stool and all!  
The heaped-up sods upon the fire,  
The pile of turf against the wall!

To have a clock with weights and chains  
And pendulum swinging up and down!  
A dresser filled with shining delph,  
Speckled and white and blue and brown!

I could be busy all the day  
Clearing and sweeping hearth and floor,  
And fixing on the shelf again  
My white and blue and speckled store!

I could be quiet there at night  
Beside the fire and by myself,  
Sure of a bed and loth to leave  
The ticking clock and the shining delph!

## PADRAIC COLUM

Och! but I'm weary of mist and dark,  
And roads where there's never a house nor bush;  
And tired I am of bog and road,  
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush!

And I am praying to God on high,  
And I am praying Him night and day,  
For a little house—a house of my own—  
Out of the wind's and the rain's way.

### *The Sea Bird to the Wave*

ON and on,  
O white brother!  
Thunder does not daunt thee!  
How thou movest!  
By thine impulse—  
With no wing!  
Fairest thing  
The wide sea shows me!  
On and on  
O white brother!  
Art thou gone!

## JOSEPH CAMPBELL

IRELAND, 1881—

CAMPBELL is an illustrator as well as a poet. He has chosen to write under the Gaelic form of his name—Seosamh MacCathmhaoil. I had a glimpse of the man in my Staten Island home some years ago; and he is certainly good to look upon—handsome in face, robust and pliant in body, manly in sentiment.

### *I Am the Mountainy Singer*

I AM the mountainy singer—

The voice of the peasant's dream,  
The cry of the wind on the wooded hill,  
The leap of the fish in the stream.

Quiet and love I sing—

The carn on the mountain crest  
The *cailin* in her lover's arms,  
The child at its mother's breast.

Beauty and peace I sing—

The fire on the open hearth,  
The *cailleach* spinning at her wheel,  
The plough in the broken earth.

Travail and pain I sing—

The bride on the childing bed,  
The dark man laboring at his rhymes,  
The ewe in the lambing shed.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

Sorrow and death I sing—  
The canker come on the corn,  
The fisher lost in the mountain loch,  
The cry at the mouth of morn.

No other life I sing,  
For I am sprung of the stock  
That broke the hilly land for bread,  
And built the nest in the rock!

*The Old Woman*

**A**S a white candle  
In a holy place,  
So is the beauty  
Of an aged face.

As the spent radiance  
Of the winter sun,  
So is a woman  
With her travail done,

Her brood gone from her,  
And her thoughts as still  
As the waters  
Under a ruined mill.

OLIVER GOGARTY  
IRELAND

*Non Dolet*

OUR friends go with us as we go  
Down the long path where Beauty wends,  
Where all we love forgathers; so  
Why should we fear to join our friends?

Who would survive them to outlast  
His children; to outwear his fame—  
Left when the Triumph has gone past—  
To win from Age, not Time, a name?

Then do not shudder at the knife  
That Death's indifferent hand drives home;  
But with the strivers leave the strife,  
Nor after Cæsar, skulk in Rome.

## LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

ENGLAND, 1881—

HERE we come upon another man whose poems have flashes of genius. In his *Interludes and Poems* and *Emblems of Love* we feel the glow of a daring spirit. His poems based upon scriptural themes, particularly the *Deborah*, have been warmly praised, and justly. A close-knit web of thought, a revel of imagery, a plenitude of human feeling, are in his verse. University professor, lecturer, eminent critic, distinguished poet—Lascelles Abercrombie is one of the significant literarians of our age.

### *Balkis*

FROM "EMBLEMS OF LOVE"

BALKIS was in her marble town  
And shadow over the world came down.  
Whiteness of walls, towers and piers,  
That all day dazzled eyes to tears,  
Turned from being white-golden flame,  
And like the deep-sea blue became.  
Balkis into her garden went:  
Her spirit was in discontent  
Like a torch in restless air.  
Joylessly she wandered where,  
And saw her city's azure white  
Lying under the great night,  
Beautiful as the memory  
Of a worshipping world would be  
In the mind of a god, in the hour  
When he must kill his outward power;

## LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

And, coming to a pool where trees  
Grew in double greeneries  
Saw herself, as she went by  
The water, walking beautifully,  
And saw the stars shine in the glance  
Of her eyes, and her own fair countenance  
Passing, pale and wonderful,  
Across the night that filled the pool.  
And cruel was the grief that played  
With the queen's spirit; and she said:  
"What do I hear, reigning alone?  
For to be unloved is to be alone.  
There is no man in all my land  
Dare my longing understand:  
The whole folk like a peasant bows  
Lest its look should meet my brows  
And be harmed by this beauty of mine.  
I burn their brains as I were sign  
Of God's beautiful anger sent  
To master them with punishment  
Of beauty that must pour distress  
On hearts grown dark with ugliness.  
But it is I am the punished one.  
Is there no man, is there none,  
In whom my beauty will but move  
The lust of a delighted love;  
In whom some spirit of God so thrives  
That we may wed our lonely lives?  
Is there no man, is there none?"  
She said, "I will go to Solomon."

*From "Marriage Song"*

COME up, dear chosen morning, come,  
Blessing the air with light,  
And bid the sky repent of being dark:  
Let all the spaces round the world be white,  
And give the earth her green again.  
Into new hours of beautiful delight,  
Out of the shadow where she has lain,  
Bring the earth awake for glee,  
Shining with dews as fresh and clear  
As my beloved's voice upon the air.  
For now, O morning chosen of all days, on thee  
A wondrous duty lies:  
There was an evening that did loveliness foretell:  
Thence upon thee, O chosen morn, it fell  
To fashion into perfect destiny  
The radiant prophecy.  
For in an evening of young moon, that went  
Filling the moist air with a rosy fire,  
I and my belovèd knew our love;  
And knew that thou, O morning, wouldest arise  
To give us knowledge of achieved desire.  
For, standing stricken with astonishment,  
Half terrified in the delight,  
Even as the moon did into clear air move  
And made a golden light,  
Lo there, crouched up against it, a dark hill,  
A monstrous back of earth, a spine  
Of hunched rock, furred with great growth of pine,  
Lay like a beast, snout in its paws, asleep;  
Yet in its sleeping seemed it miserable,  
As though strong fear must always keep  
Hold of its heart, and drive its blood in dream.

## LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

Yea, for to our new love, did it not seem,  
That dark and quiet length of hill,  
The sleeping grief of the world?—Out of it we  
Had like imaginations stepped to be  
Beauty and golden wonder, and for the lovely fear  
Of coming perfect joy, had changed  
The terror that dreamt there!  
And now the golden moon had turned  
To shining white, white as our souls that burned  
With vision of our prophecy assured:  
Suddenly white was the moon; but she  
At once did on a woven modesty  
Of cloud, and soon went in obscured.  
And we were dark, and vanished that strange hill.  
But yet it was not long before  
There opened in the sky a narrow door,  
Made with pearl lintel and pearl sill;  
And the earth's night seemed pressing there—  
All as a beggar on some festival would peer—  
To gaze into a room of light beyond,  
The hidden silver splendor of the moon.  
Yea, and we also, we  
Long gazed wistfully  
Toward thee, O morning, come at last,  
And toward the light that thou wilt pour upon us soon!

\* \* \* \* \*

For wonderfully to live I now begin;  
So that the darkness which accompanies  
Our being here, is fastened up within  
The power of light that holdeth me;  
And from these shining chains, to see  
My joy with bold misliking eyes,  
The shrouded figure will not dare arise.

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

For henceforth, from to-night,  
I am wholly gone into the bright  
Safety of the beauty of love;  
Not only all my waking vigors plied  
Under the searching glory of love,  
But knowing myself with love all satisfied  
Even when my life is hidden in sleep;  
As high clouds, to themselves that keep  
The moon's white company, are all possessed  
Silverly with the presence of their guest;  
Or as a darkened room  
That hath within it roses, whence the air  
And quietness are taken everywhere  
Deliciously by sweet perfume.

## JOHN DRINKWATER

ENGLAND, 1882—

DRINKWATER is both a poet and a dramatist of distinction. Chief among his plays is *Abraham Lincoln*, successfully produced in London and New York in 1918. He is not only a maker, but is also a brilliant interpreter, of poetry, as evidenced by his exhaustive study of *The Lyric*, of *The Way of Poetry*, and of *Victorian Poetry*.

### *Symbols*

I SAW history in a poet's song,  
In a river reach and a gallows-hill,  
In a bridal bed, and a secret wrong,  
In a crown of thorns: in a daffodil.

I imagined measureless time in a day,  
And starry space in a wagon-road;  
And the treasure of all good harvests lay  
In a single seed that the sower sowed.

My garden-wind had driven and havened again  
All ships that ever had gone to sea,  
And I felt the presence of all dead men  
In the shadow that went by the side of me.

*Holiness*

**I**F all the carts were painted gay,  
And all the streets swept clean,  
And all the children came to play  
By hollyhocks, with green  
Grasses to grow between,

If all the houses looked as though  
Some hearts were in their stones—  
If all the people that we know  
Were dressed in scarlet gowns,  
With feathers in their crowns,

I think this gaiety would make  
A spiritual land.

I think that holiness would take  
The laughter by the hand,  
Till both should understand.

# JOHN DRINKWATER

## *A Prayer*

*Here in this epigraph is sounded again the old need of man, proclaimed by all the seers.*

**G**RANT us the will to fashion as we feel,  
Grant us the strength to labor as we know;  
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,  
To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent:  
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need.  
Give us to build above the deep intent  
The deed, the deed!

## *Vocation*

**T**HIS be my pilgrimage and goal,  
Daily to march and find  
The secret phrases of the soul,  
The evangel of the mind.

While easy tongues are lightly heard,  
Let me with them be great,  
Who still upon the perfect word  
As heavenly fowlers wait.

In taverns none will I be seen,  
But can my dæmon teach  
My cloudy thought to wash all clean  
In the bright sun of speech.

## WINIFRED M. LETTS

IRELAND, 1882—

THIS poet has turned from the stories of the great of old, to give us, in ballads, the humor and pathos in the lives of the Irish peasants. Her most famous lyric is *The Spires of Oxford*. She is always a poet of power.

### *Somehow, Somewhere, Sometime*

SOMEHOW, but God knows how, we'll meet again,  
You'll see the firelight on the pane,  
Knock at the door, call "Come, my dear."  
You'll hear the bolt drawn—"You, love, here?"  
And answer, "Yes—no partings now,  
For all things have come right somehow."

Somewhere beyond the furthest, western sea,  
My boat will reach a sun-washed quay,  
White birds, brown sails, a topaz sky,  
Your smile of welcome. You and I  
Together with all time to spare,  
A brave new shining world—somewhere!

Sometime . . . but now, how long we have to wait,  
Gray hair, deaf ears, slow feeble gait,  
The dull monotony of age,  
The book of life spelt page by page  
Till sight fails, hope fails, then sublime  
The great surprise of death—sometime!

*The Spires of Oxford*

I SAW the spires of Oxford  
As I was passing by,  
The grey spires of Oxford  
Against a pearl-grey sky;  
My heart was with the Oxford men  
Who went abroad to die.

The years go fast in Oxford,  
The golden years and gay;  
The hoary colleges look down  
On careless boys at play,  
But when the bugles sounded—War!  
They put their games away.

They left the peaceful river,  
The cricket field, the quad,  
The shaven lawns of Oxford  
To seek a bloody sod.  
They gave their merry youth away  
For country and for God.

God rest you, happy gentlemen,  
Who laid your good lives down,  
Who took the khaki and the gun  
Instead of cap and gown.  
God bring you to a fairer place  
Than even Oxford town.

*Grandeur*

POOR Mary Byrne is dead,  
An' all the world may see  
Where she lies upon her bed  
Just as fine as quality.

She lies there still and white,  
With candles either hand  
That'll guard her through the night:  
Sure she never was so grand.

She holds her rosary,  
Her hands clasped on her breast.  
Just as dacint as can be  
In the habit she's been dressed.

In life her hands were red  
With every sort of toil;  
But they're white now she is dead,  
An' they've sorra mark of soil.

The neighbors come and go,  
They kneel to say a prayer:  
I wish herself could know  
Of the way she's lyin' there.

It was work from morn till night,  
And hard she earned her bread;  
But I'm thinking she's right  
To be aisy now she's dead.

WINIFRED M. LETTS

When other girls were gay,  
At wedding or at fair,  
She'd be toiling all the day,  
Not a minyit could she spare.

An' no one missed her face,  
Or sought her in a crowd;  
But to-day they throng the place  
Just to see her in her shroud.

The creature in her life  
Drew trouble with each breath:  
She was just "poor Jim Byrne's wife"—  
But she's lovely in her death.

I wish the dead could see  
The splendor of a wake,  
For it's proud herself would be  
Of the keening that they make.

Och! little Mary Byrne,  
You welcome every guest:  
Is it now you take your turn  
To be merry with the rest?

I'm thinking you'd be glad,  
Though the angels make your bed,  
Could you see the care we've had  
To respect you—now you're dead.

*The Children's Ghosts*

**H**EROD sitting on his throne,  
Lest he should hear the children moan,  
And lose awhile his careless ease,  
Bade sackbuts play and psalteries,  
Bade flutes and tabors take their part  
To cheat the terror in his heart,  
To drown the wailing of a child  
That came upon the storm wind wild.

Herod, lord of armèd hosts,  
Had fear of murdered babies' ghosts.  
He bade his dancing girls appear  
That they might dance away his fear.  
He called his nobles in to dine  
And drugged his sullen soul with wine.  
But when at night he lay asleep  
The little ghosts drew near to weep. . . .

So old and new the sacrifice  
When innocents must pay the price.  
Age after age the children give  
Their lives that Herod still may live—  
They shiver naked in the cold  
That he may dress in cloth of gold.  
Piteous and pale for lack of bread  
They starve to keep his table spread.

## WINIFRED M. LETTS

Now Herod bids you turn away  
Lest, through your jazz-bands loud and gay,  
The Eastern wind should hear the cry  
Of starving babies doomed to die.  
He bids you mothers take no heed  
Of all the mothers' hearts that bleed,  
But turn the spectre from the door  
And lay up food and clothes in store.

But if you be not Herod's kin  
The little ghosts will enter in,  
Will take your hands and unafraid  
Tell you their tale and crave your aid:  
"No longer now we suffer pain,  
But let these others laugh again.  
Make haste! Before it is too late!  
For Death stands knocking at the gate!"

## JAMES STEPHENS

IRELAND, 1882—

STEPHENS has arrested the attention of the world with his grotesque yet suggestive creations of the imagination. His prose phantasies—as well as his poems—are sprinkled with strange whimsical beauties. *The Crock of Gold* and *The Hill of Vision* are volumes known to us all.

### *What Tomas An Buile Said in a Pub*

I SAW God. Do you doubt it?

I Do you dare to doubt it?

I saw the Almighty Man. His hand

Was resting on a mountain, and

He looked upon the World and all about it:

I saw him plainer than you see me now,

You mustn't doubt it.

He was not satisfied;

His look was all dissatisfied.

His beard swung on a wind far out of sight

Behind the world's curve, and there was light

Most fearful from His forehead, and He sighed,

"That star went always wrong, and from the start

I was dissatisfied."

## JAMES STEPHENS

He lifted up His hand—

I say He heaved a dreadful hand  
Over the spinning Earth. Then I said: "Stay,  
You must not strike it, God; I'm in the way,  
And I will never move from where I stand."

He said, "Dear child, I feared that you were dead,"  
And stayed His hand.

### *To the Four Courts, Please*

THE driver rubbed at his nettly chin  
With a huge, loose forefinger, crooked and black;  
And his wobbly, violet lips sucked in,  
And puffed out again and hung down slack.  
One fang shone through his lop-sided smile,  
In his little pouched eye flickered years of guile.

And the horse, poor beast, it was ribbed and forked,  
And its ears hung down, and its eyes were old;  
And its knees were knuckly, and as we talked  
It swung the stiff neck that could scarcely hold  
Its big, skinny head up—then I stepped in,  
And the driver climbed to his seat with a grin.

God help the horse and the driver too,  
And the people and beasts who have never a friend;  
For the driver easily might have been you,  
And the horse be me by a different end.  
And nobody knows how their days will cease;  
And the poor, when they're old, have little of peace.

*Check*

THE night was creeping on the ground:  
She crept and did not make a sound  
Until she reached the tree, and then  
She covered it, and stole again  
Along the grass beside the wall.

I heard the rustle of her shawl  
As she threw blackness everywhere  
Upon the sky and ground and air,  
And in the room where I was hid;  
But no matter what she did  
To everything that was without,  
She could not put my candle out.

So I stared at the night, and she  
Stared back solemnly at me.

*The Snare, to A. E.*

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain!  
There is a rabbit in a snare:  
Now I hear the cry again,  
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where  
He is calling out for aid;  
Crying on the frightened air,  
Making everything afraid.

## JAMES STEPHENS

Making everything afraid,  
Wrinkling up his little face,  
As he cries again for aid;  
And I cannot find the place!

And I cannot find the place  
Where his paw is in the snare:  
Little one! Oh, little one!  
I am searching everywhere.

### *Hawks*

AND as we walked, the grass was faintly stirred;  
We did not speak—there was no need to speak.  
Above our heads there flew a little bird,  
A silent one who feared that we might seek  
Her hard-hid nest.

Poor little frightened one!  
If we had found your nest that sunny day  
We would have passed it by; we would have gone  
And never looked or frightened you away.

O little bird! there's many have a nest,  
A hard-found, open place, with many a foe;  
And hunger and despair and little rest,  
And more to fear than you can know.

Shield the nests where'er they be,  
On the ground or on the tree;  
Guard the poor from treachery.

*The Fur Coat*

I WALKED out in my Coat of Pride,  
I looked about on every side,  
And said the mountains should not be  
Just where they were, and that the sea  
Was out of place, and that the beech  
Should be an oak. And then from each  
I turned in dignity as if  
They were not there: I sniffed a sniff  
And climbed upon my sunny shelf,  
And sneezed a while, and scratched myself.

*Hate*

MY enemy came nigh,  
And I  
stared fiercely in his face.  
My lips went writhing back in a grimace,  
and stern I watched him with a narrow eye.  
Then, as I turned away, my enemy,  
that bitter heart and savage, said to me:  
"Some day, when this is past,  
When all the arrows that we have are cast,  
We may ask one another why we hate,  
and fail to find a story to relate.  
It may seem to us then a mystery  
that we could hate each other."

Thus said he,

and did not turn away,  
Waiting to hear what I might have to say;  
but I fled quickly, fearing if I stayed  
I might have kissed him as I would a maid.

EDMUND JOHN  
ENGLAND, 1883-1917

**A** DESCENDANT of the Welsh bard Iolo Morganwg, this poet was a student, a traveler, an idealist and mystic—and one more of the fine young artists who fell in the World War. His books are *Symphonie Symbolique* and *The Flute of Sardonyx*. Stephen Phillips says: "He has poetry, has fire, sense of color, and an exaltation leaning temperamentally toward the purely sensuous, rather than the strictly meditative."

*From "Symphonie Symbolique"*

**A**ND what I seek I know not,  
Save that it is unseen and flawless . . . and uncrowned . . .  
Some great perfection of pure form or color or sound  
Or odor, of the soul and body; so my limbs may slake  
At last their thirst of touch, so that my heart may flame,  
Burn itself out and ache  
No more to hear thy name.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is a solemn sound,  
Deep, clear, as of a bell far off beyond the sea  
Of consciousness; a rhythmic beating that might be  
The beating of great wings unseen above one's head. . . .  
Icarian wings . . . that even now throb out profound  
farewell

## EDMUND JOHN

Through the dark locks of the dead,  
To the dreamers in Hell.

\* \* \* \*

The solemn bell has ceased,  
And on the spectral shore  
The Shadow dreams no more,  
As some dark soul released  
Might vanish in the night. . . .  
The dead folk have ceased their ringing. . . .  
And the waves are alight. . . .  
Some god . . . some white god . . . is singing.

### *Fragment*

**G**IVE me your hands, and let your strange wild eyes,  
Full of the scented night and the deep sea,  
Bid me farewell before the dawn can rise  
Upon this garden of Gethsemane.

Your lips upon my mouth—again—again!  
O Love! O Life! the Voice of the Unknown  
Calls to my soul and quivers through my pain,  
And I must follow . . . follow it alone.

MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL  
ENGLAND, 1883—1922

*I Sat among the Green Leaves*

I SAT among the green leaves, and heard the nuts  
falling,  
The broad red butterflies were gold against the sun;  
But in between the silence and the sweet birds calling  
The nuts fell one by one.

Why should they fall and the year but half over?  
Why should sorrow seek me and I so young and kind?  
The leaf is on the bough and the dew is on the clover,  
But the green nuts are falling in the wind.

Oh, I gave my lips away and all my soul behind them:  
Why should trouble follow and the quick tears start?  
The little birds may love and fly with only God to  
mind them,  
But the green nuts are falling on my heart.

*Duna*

WHEN I was a little lad  
With folly on my lips,  
Fain was I for journeying  
All the seas in ships.  
But now across the southern swell,  
Every dawn I hear  
The little streams of Duna  
Running clear.

When I was a young man,  
Before my beard was grey,  
All to ships and sailormen  
I gave my heart away.  
But I'm weary of the sea-wind,  
I'm weary of the foam,  
And the little stars of Duna  
Call me home.

ANNA WICKHAM  
ENGLAND, 1883—

HERE is a contemporary woman poet who challenges tradition, defies her masters, and declares war for the spiritual liberation of women. In verse I call to mind no feminine poetic declaration of independence comparable to *The Contemplative Quarry* and its successor, *The Man With the Hammer*.

*The Contemplative Quarry*

MY love is male and proper-man  
And what he'd have he'd get by chase;  
So I must cheat as women can  
And keep my love from off my face.  
'Tis folly to my dawning, thrifty thought  
That I must run, who in the end am caught.

*The Affinity*

I HAVE to thank God I'm a woman,  
For in these ordered days a woman only  
Is free to be very hungry, very lonely.

It is sad for Feminism, but still clear  
That man, more often than woman, is a pioneer,  
If I would confide a new thought,  
First to a man must it be brought.

## ANNA WICKHAM

Now, for our sins, it is my bitter fate  
That such a man wills soon to be my mate,  
And so of friendship is quick end:  
When I have gained a lover I lose a friend.

It is well within the order of things  
That man should listen when his mate sings;  
But the true male never yet walked  
Who liked to listen when his mate talked.

I would be married to a full man,  
As would all women since the world began;  
But from a wealth of living I have proved  
I must be silent, if I would be loved.

Now of my silence I have much wealth;  
I have to do my thinking all by stealth.  
My thought may never see the day:  
My mind is like a catacomb where early Christians pray.

### *The Marriage*

**W**HAT a great battle you and I have fought!  
A fight of sticks and whips and swords,  
A one-armed combat,  
For each held the left hand pressed close to the heart,  
To save the caskets from assault.

## ANNA WICKHAM

How tenderly we guarded them;  
I would keep mine and still have yours,  
And you held fast to yours and coveted mine.  
Could we have dropped the caskets  
We would have thrown down weapons  
And been at each other like apes,  
Scratching, biting, hugging  
In exasperation.

What a fight!  
Thank God that I was strong as you,  
And you, though not my master, were my match.  
How we panted; we grew dizzy with rage.  
We forgot everything but the fight and love of the  
caskets.  
These we called by great names—  
Personality, Liberty, Individuality.

Each fought for right to keep himself a slave  
And to redeem his fellow.  
How can this be done?  
But the fight ended,  
For both was victory;  
For both there was defeat.  
Through blood we saw the caskets on the floor.

Our jewels were revealed:  
An ugly toad is mine,  
While yours was filled with most contemptible small  
snakes.  
One held my vanity, the other held your sloth.

The fight is over, and our eyes are clear.  
Good friend, shake hands.

*Sehnsucht*

**B**ECAUSE of body's hunger are we born,  
And by contriving hunger are we fed:  
Because of hunger is our work well done,  
As so are songs well sung, and things well said.  
Desire and longing are the whips of God—  
**G**od save us all from death when we are fed.

*Creatrix*

**L**ET us thank Almighty God  
For the woman with the rod;  
Who was ever and is now  
Strong essential as the plough.  
She shall goad and she shall drive,  
So to keep man's soul alive.  
Amoris with her scented dress  
Beckons, in pretty wantonness;  
But the wife drives, nor can man tell  
What hands so urge, what powers compel.

*The Tired Man*

I AM a quiet gentleman,  
And I would sit and dream;  
But my wife is on the hillside,  
Wild as a hill-stream.

I am a quiet gentleman,  
And I would sit and think;  
But my wife is walking the whirlwind  
Through night as black as ink.

Oh, give me a woman of my race  
As well controlled as I;  
And let us sit by the fire,  
Patient till we die!

*The Singer*

I F I had peace to sit and sing,  
Then I could make a lovely thing;  
But I am stung with goads and whips,  
So I build songs like iron ships.

Let it be something for my song  
If it is sometimes swift and strong.

## JAMES ELROY FLECKER

ENGLAND, 1884—1915

AT this moment, the *Collected Poems* of Flecker lie open before me. He loved the French Parnassians, with their careful technique and their rejection of the emotional and the didactic. He put his poetic creed into a brilliant epigram: "The poet's business is not to save the soul, but to make it worth saving." During his last days in Switzerland, he felt the agony of the World War, and he sounded his deepest note and rose into his highest level of song. Flecker, it is said, worked years over his little masterpiece, *Tenebris Interlucentem*, in order to make it the expression of a significant thing with the utmost economy of words.

### *To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence*

I WHO am dead a thousand years,  
And wrote this sweet archaic song,  
Send you my words for messengers  
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas,  
Or ride secure the cruel sky,  
Or build consummate palaces  
Of metal or of masonry.

But you have wine and music still,  
And statues and a bright-eyed love,  
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,  
And prayers to them that sit above?

## JAMES ELROY FLECKER

How shall we conquer? Like a wind  
That falls at eve our fancies blow,  
And old Mœonides the blind  
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend, unseen, unborn, unknown,  
Student of our sweet English tongue,  
Read out my words at night, alone:  
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,  
And never shake you by the hand,  
I send my soul through time and space  
To greet you. You will understand.

### *Tenebris Interlucentem*

*This is one of the perfect things, which will perhaps go down the centuries.*

A LINNET who had lost her way  
Sang on a blackened bough in Hell,  
Till all the ghosts remembered well  
The trees, the wind, the golden day.

At last they knew that they had died  
When they heard music in that land;  
And some one there stole forth a hand  
To draw a brother to his side.

J. C. SQUIRE  
ENGLAND, 1884—

**S**QUIRE was at one time the editor of *The New Statesman*. He is now the editor of *The London Mercury*, and is a writer of intelligent and penetrating criticisms of modern poetry. *Poems: First Series* is the title of his book of verse.

### *The Happy Night*

**I** HAVE loved to-night; from love's last bordering steep

I have fallen at last with joy and forgotten the shore.

I have known my love to-night as never before,

I have flung myself in the deep, and drawn from the deep,

And kissed her lightly, and left my belovèd to sleep.

And now I sit in the night and my heart is still:

Strong and secure; there is nothing that's left to will,  
There is nothing to win but only a thing to keep.

And I look to-night, completed and not afraid,

Into the windy dark where shines no light;

And care not at all though the darkness never should fade,

Nor fear that death should suddenly come to-night.

Knowing my last would be surely my bravest breath,  
I am happy to-night: I have laughed to-night at death.

*The Three Hills*

**T**HERE were three hills that stood alone  
With woods about their feet.  
They dreamed quiet when the sun shone  
And whispered when the rain beat.

They wore all three their coronals  
Till men with houses came,  
And scored their heads with pits and walls  
And thought the hills were tame.

Red and white the clay shines bright,  
They hide the green for miles.  
Where are the old hills gone? At night  
The moon looks down and smiles.

She sees the captors small and weak,  
She knows the prisoners strong,  
She hears the patient hills that speak:  
"Brothers, it is not long:

"Brothers, we stood when they were not  
Ten thousand summers past.  
Brothers, when they are clean forgot  
We shall outlive the last;

"One shall die and one shall flee  
With terror in his train;  
And earth shall eat the stones, and we  
Shall be alone again."

*An Epitaph*

**S**HIFTLESS and shy, gentle and kind and frail,  
Poor wanderer, bewildered into vice:  
You are freed at last from seas you could not sail,  
A wreck upon the shores of Paradise.

*The Birds*

**W**ITHIN mankind's duration, so they say,  
Khephren and Ninus lived but yesterday.  
Asia had no name till man was old  
And long had learned the use of iron and gold;  
And æons had passed, when the first corn was planted,  
Since first the use of syllables was granted.

Men were on earth while climates slowly swung,  
Fanning wide zones to heat and cold, and long  
Subsidence turned great continents to sea,  
And seas dried up, dried up interminably.  
Age after age; enormous seas were dried  
Amid wastes of land. And the last monsters died.

Earth wore another face. Oh, since that prime  
Man with how many works has sprinkled time!  
Hammering, hewing, digging tunnels, roads;  
Building ships, temples, multiform abodes.  
How, for his body's appetites, his toils  
Have conquered all earth's products, all her soils;  
And in what thousand thousand shapes of art  
He has tried to find a language for his heart!

## J. C. SQUIRE

Never at rest, never content or tired:  
Insatiate wanderer, marvellously fired,  
Most grandly piling and piling into the air  
Stones that will topple or arch he knows not where.  
And yet did I, this spring, think it more strange,  
More grand, more full of awe, than all that change,  
And lovely and sweet and touching unto tears,  
That through man's chronicled and unchronicled years,  
And even into that unguessable beyond  
The water-hen has nested by a pond,  
Weaving dry flags into a beaten floor,  
The one sure product of her only lore.  
Low on a ledge above the shadowed water  
Then, when she heard no men, as nature taught her,  
Plashing around with busy scarlet bill  
She built that nest, her nest, and builds it still.

O let your strong imagination turn  
The great wheel backward, until Troy unburn,  
And then unbuild, and seven Troys below  
Rise out of death, and dwindle, and outflow,  
Till all have passed, and none has yet been there:  
Back, ever back. Our birds still crossed the air;  
Beyond our myriad changing generations  
Still built, unchanged, their known inhabitations.  
A million years before Atlantis was  
Our lark sprang from some hollow in the grass,  
Some old soft hoof-print in a tussock's shade;  
And the wood-pigeon's smooth snow-white eggs were  
laid,  
High amid green pines' sunset-colored shafts,  
And rooks their villages of twiggy rafts  
Set on the tops of elms, where elms grew then,  
And still the thumbling tit and perky wren

## J. C. SQUIRE

Popped through the tiny doors of cosy balls  
And the blackbird lined with moss his high-built walls;  
A round mud cottage held the thrush's young,  
And straws from the untidy sparrow's hung.  
And, skimming forktailed in the evening air,  
When man first was were not the martens there?  
Did not those birds some human shelter crave,  
And stow beneath the cornice of his cave  
Their dry tight cups of clay? And from each door  
Peeped on a morning wiseheads three or four.

F. W. HARVEY  
ENGLAND, 20TH CENTURY

HARVEY, a man who may be called a one-poem poet, was a lance-corporal in the World War.

*The Bugler*

GOD dreamed a man;  
Then, having firmly shut  
Life like a precious metal in his fist  
Withdrew, His labor done. Thus did begin  
Our various divinity and sin.  
For some to ploughshares did the metal twist,  
And others—dreaming empires—straightway cut  
Crowns for their aching foreheads. Others beat  
Long nails and heavy hammers for the feet  
Of their forgotten Lord. (Who dares to boast  
That he is guiltless?) Others coined it: most  
Did with it—simply nothing. (Here again  
Who cries his innocence?) Yet doth remain  
Metal unmarred, to each man more or less,  
Whereof to fashion perfect loveliness.

For me, I do but bear within my hand  
(For sake of Him our Lord, now long forsaken)  
A simple bugle such as may awaken  
With one high morning note a drowsing man:  
That wheresoe'er within my motherland  
That sound may come, 'twill echo far and wide  
Like pipes of battle calling up a clan,  
Trumpeting men through beauty to God's side.

## D. H. LAWRENCE

ENGLAND, 1885—

L AWRENCE is a writer of poems and romances, giving us a strange mixture of the mystic and the morbid. Louis Untermeyer says of him: "As a poet he is often caught in the net of his own emotions: his passion thickens his utterance and distorts his rhythms, which sometimes seem purposely harsh and bitter-flavored. But within his range, he is as powerful as he is poignant."

### *Snake*

A SNAKE came to my water-trough  
On a hot, hot day, and I in my pyjamas for the  
heat,  
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark  
carob tree  
I came down the steps with my pitcher  
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was  
at the trough before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in  
the gloom  
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied  
down, over the edge of the stone trough  
And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,  
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a  
small clearness,

D. H. LAWRENCE

He sipped with his straight mouth,  
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack  
long body,  
Silently.

Someone was before me at my water-trough,  
And I, like a second-comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,  
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,  
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and  
mused a moment,  
And stooped and drank a little more,  
Being earth-brown, earth-golden from the burning  
bowels of the earth  
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.

The voice of my education said to me  
He must be killed,  
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the  
gold are venomous.

And the voices in me said, If you were a man  
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish  
him off.

But must I confess how I liked him,  
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to  
drink at my water-trough  
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless  
Into the burning bowels of this earth?

Was it cowardice, that I dared not kill him?  
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?

## D. H. LAWRENCE

Was it humility, to feel so honored?  
I felt so honored.

And yet those voices:  
*If you were not afraid, you would kill him!*

And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid,  
But even so, honored still more  
That he should seek my hospitality  
From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough  
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,  
And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the air,  
    so black,  
Seeming to lick his lips,  
And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,  
And slowly turned his head,  
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream  
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round  
And climb again the broken bank of my wall-face.

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,  
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,  
    and entered further,  
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his with-  
    drawing into that horrid black hole,  
Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly draw-  
    ing himself after,  
Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,  
I picked up a clumsy log  
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

D. H. LAWRENCE

I think it did not hit him;  
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind  
    convulsed in undignified haste,  
Writhed like lightning, and was gone  
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall-  
    front  
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fas-  
    cination.

And immediately I regretted it.  
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!  
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human  
    education.

And I thought of the albatross,  
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,  
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,  
Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords  
Of life.  
And I have something to expiate:  
A pettiness.

GERALD GOULD  
ENGLAND, 1885—

*Wander-Thirst*

B<sup>EYOND</sup> the East the sunrise; beyond the West the sea;  
And East and West the wander-thirst that will not let me be.  
It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-bye;  
For the seas call and the stars call, and oh! the call of the sky.

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are;  
But a man can have the Sun for friend, and for his guide a star;  
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is heard,  
For the river calls and the road calls, and oh! the call of a bird!

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day,  
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail away;  
And come I may, but go I must, and, if men ask you why,  
You may put the blame on the Stars and the Sun and the white road and the sky.

ROBERT RICHARDSON  
AUSTRALIA, ?—1901

*Requiem*

*Mark Twain had the following little poem engraved upon the tombstone of his daughter, who died in 1896; and at first the authorship of it was attributed to him. When this was reported to the humorist, he ordered the name of the Australian poet, Richardson, cut beneath the words. In the original, the word "southern" reads "northern," because in Australia the warm wind is from the north.*

WARM summer sun  
Shine kindly here;  
Warm southern wind  
Blow softly here;  
Green sod above  
Lie light, lie light—  
Good night, dear heart,  
Good night, good night!

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

ENGLAND, 1886—

**I**N Sassoon, we come upon one of the most powerful personalities in modern poetry. He was in the World War; and while on furlough in 1920, he gave readings from his poems in America, showing forth the gigantic horror and utter futility of war. You get something of the same feeling in that terrific prose volume by Barbusse, *Under Fire*. Sassoon published his *Counter Attack* in 1918, poems that expressed his impassioned revolt against militarism. Take this from the preface by the soldier-poet Robert Nichols: "Let no one ever say one word in any way countenancing war. It is dangerous even to speak of how here and there the individual may gain some hardship of soul by it. For war is hell, and *those who institute it are criminals*. Were there even anything to say for it, it should not be said; for its spiritual disasters far outweigh any of its advantages." Sassoon has three volumes of verse, all voicing his unsparing protest against the frightful tragedy of war.

### *From "Aftermath"*

**D**O you remember the dark months you held the sector at Mametz—  
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled sandbags on parapets?

Do you remember the rats, and the stench  
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench—  
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?  
Do you ever stop and ask, "Is it all going to happen again?"

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack—  
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and  
shook you then

As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your  
men?

Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back  
With dying eyes and lolling heads, those ashen-grey  
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and  
gay?

*Have you forgotten yet? . . .*

*Look up, and swear by the green of the Spring that  
you'll never forget.*

### *The Rear-Guard*

**G**ROPING along the tunnel, step by step,  
He winked his prying torch with patching glare  
From side to side, and sniffed the unwholesome air.

Tins, boxes, bottles, shapes too vague to know,  
A mirror smashed, the mattress from a bed;  
And he, exploring fifty feet below  
The rosy gloom of battle overhead.

Tripping, he grabbed the wall; saw someone lie  
Humped at his feet, half-hidden by a rug,  
And stooped to give the sleeper's arm a tug.  
"I'm looking for headquarters." No reply.  
"God blast your neck!" (For days he'd had no sleep.)  
"Get up and guide me through this stinking place."  
Savage, he kicked a soft, unanswering heap,  
And flashed his beam across the livid face

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

Terribly glaring up, whose eyes yet wore  
Agony dying hard ten days before;  
And fists of fingers clutched a blackening wound.  
Alone he staggered on until he found  
Dawn's ghost that filtered down a shafted stair  
To the dazed, muttering creatures underground  
Who hear the boom of shells in muffled sound.  
At last, with sweat of horror in his hair,  
He climbed through darkness to the twilight air,  
Unloading hell behind him step by step.

### *Does It Matter?*

**D**OES it matter?—losing your leg . . .  
For people will always be kind,  
And you need not show that you mind  
When the others come in after hunting  
To gobble their muffins and eggs.

Does it matter?—losing your sight? . . .  
There's such splendid work for the blind;  
And people will always be kind,  
As you sit on the terrace remembering  
And turning your face to the light.

Do they matter?—those dreams from the pit?  
You can drink and forget and be glad,  
And people won't say that you're mad;  
For they'll know that you've fought for your country,  
And no one will worry a bit.

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

### *They*

THE Bishop tells us: "When the boys come back  
They will not be the same; for they'll have fought  
In a just cause: they led the last attack  
On Anti-Christ; their comrades' blood has bought  
New right to breed an honorable race.  
They have challenged Death and dared him face to  
face."

"We're none of us the same!" the boys reply.  
"For George lost both his legs; and Bill's stone blind;  
Poor Jim's shot through the lungs and like to die;  
And Bert's gone syphilitic. You'll not find  
A chap who's served that hasn't found *some* change."  
And the Bishop said: "The ways of God are strange!"

## RUPERT BROOKE

ENGLAND, 1887—1915

His death at the age of twenty-seven while serving with the British military forces in the Dardanelles, cast a halo over the writings of this young English poet. It required the Great War to move him to such a splendid utterance as the sonnet on *The Soldier* which, with half a dozen other poems almost equal to *The Great Lover*, indicate the loss suffered by English literature through his death. There is an intense passion in his poems, and a sense of the beauty that cannot stay.

### *The Soldier*

If I should die, think only this of me:  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is forever England. There shall be  
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;  
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,  
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;  
A body of England's, breathing English air,  
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,  
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less,  
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England  
given;  
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;  
And laughter learnt of friends; and gentleness,  
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

*From "The Great Lover"*

THESE I have loved:

White plates and cups clean-gleaming,  
 Ringed with blue lines; and feathery faery dust;  
 Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light; the strong crust  
 Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;  
 Rainbows and the blue bitter smoke of wood;  
 And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;  
 And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,  
 Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon:  
 Then, the cool kindliness of sheets, that soon  
 Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss  
 Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is  
 Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen  
 Unpassioned beauty of a great machine;  
 The benison of hot water; furs to touch;  
 The good smell of old clothes; and other such—  
 The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,  
 Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers  
 About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . . Dear  
 names,

And thousand other throng to me! Royal flames;  
 Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;  
 Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing;  
 Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,  
 Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;  
 Firm sands; the little dulling edge of foam  
 That browns and dwindleth as the wave goes home;  
 And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold  
 Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mold;  
 Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;  
 And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-new;  
 And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on grass—

## RUPERT BROOKE

All these have been my loves. And these shall pass,  
Whatever passes not, in the great hour;  
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power  
To hold them with me through the gate of Death.  
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,  
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust  
And sacramented covenant to the dust.  
Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,  
And give what's left of love again, and make  
New friends, now strangers. . . .

But the best I've known

Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is blown  
About the winds of the world, and fades from brains  
Of living men, and dies.

Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again  
This one last gift I give: that after men  
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed,  
Praise you, "All these were lovely"; say, "He loved."

## EDITH SITWELL

ENGLAND, 1887—

MISS SITWELL is the editor of that series of anthologies that have the quaint name *Wheels*. They contain the work of a few of the radicals. Her own verse appears in three volumes—*Clowns' Houses*, *The Mother and Other Poems* and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Her Muse is fantastic, frequently to the point of incomprehensibility. Of the two selections that follow, you will greatly enjoy the poetry of the first and the cleverness of the second.

### *The Web of Eros*

WITHIN your magic web of hair lies furled  
The fire and splendor of the ancient world;  
The dire gold of the comet's wind-blown hair,  
The songs that turned to gold the evening air  
When all the stars of heaven sang for joy,  
The flames that burnt the cloud-high city Troy,  
The maenad fire of spring on the cold earth,  
The myrrh-lit flame that gave both death and birth  
To the soul of Phoenix, and the star-bright shower  
That came to Danaë in her brazen tower . . .  
Within your magic web of hair lies furled  
The fire and splendor of the ancient world.

*Perpetuum Mobile*

A PANTOUM, MORE OR LESS

PILK lauds the verse of Jobble to the skies,  
And Jobble says that Bibson's Dante's peer.  
Bibson is great on Pagg—"What art!" he cries,  
While Pagg is sure that Dubkin is a seer.

While Pagg is sure that Dubkin is a seer,  
Dubkin swears Botchell's odes will never wane.  
Botchell commands: "Watch Pimpington's career!"  
Pimpington writes a book on Trodger's brain.

Pimpington writes a book on Trodger's brain,  
And Trodger shrieks: "Glabb's genius stirs my soul!"  
Glabb raves of Cringely's rhymes with might and main:  
Cringely pens Gummit's name on glory's scroll.

Cringely pens Gummit's name on glory's scroll,  
And Gummit sees in Sludd new worlds arise:  
Sludd bids us hear Pilk's mighty rhythms roll;  
Pilk lauds the verse of Jobble to the skies. . . .

## RICHARD MIDDLETON

ENGLAND, 1889—1911

MIDDLETON found in pleasure and passion themes most expressive of his spirit. His melodious meters and luxurious phrases chiefly celebrate themes on the sensuous level. He is satisfied with the pleasant outer show of things, ignoring the meaning behind this transient visibility. His complete works consist of three volumes of prose, and two volumes of verse.

### *Heyst-sur-Mer*

UNDER the arch of summer  
The great black ships go by,  
The sun is like a bead of blood  
Upon the wounded sky,  
The girls are dancing, dancing,  
And night falls tenderly.

Would I were on a great ship  
With the wind upon my face,  
And the water's music in my ears,  
And the rigging's song of grace,  
Would I were on a great ship  
Bound to a new place.

Where trees are and flowers are  
And breakers on the shore,  
Where a child might find all the dreams  
That he had known before,

## RICHARD MIDDLETON

Where I should be at peace at last  
And the girls would dance no more.

Under the arch of summer  
The great black ships go by,  
There is a madness in the wind,  
A wonder in the sky,  
And the girls are dancing, dancing . . .  
No peace, no peace have I.

### *Pagan Epitaph*

SERVANT of the eternal Must,  
I lie here, here let me lie,  
In the ashes and the dust,  
    Dreaming, dreaming pleasantly.  
When I lived I sought no wings,  
    Schemed no heaven, planned no hell;  
But, content with little things,  
    Made an earth, and it was well.

Song and laughter, food and wine,  
    Roses, roses, red and white,  
And a star or two to shine  
    On my dewy world at night.  
Lord, what more could I desire?  
    With my little heart of clay  
I have lit no eternal fire  
    To burn my dreams on Judgment Day!

## T. P. CAMERON WILSON

ENGLAND, 1889—1918

**A** GRADUATE of Oxford, Wilson wrote one novel and was teaching school at Hindhead, Surrey, when the World War started. He enlisted and was promoted to a captaincy. He was killed in action.

### *Sportsmen in Paradise*

THEY left the fury of the fight,  
And they were very tired.  
The gates of Heaven were open quite,  
Unguarded and unwired.  
There was no sound of any gun,  
The land was still and green:  
Wide hills lay silent in the sun,  
Blue valleys slept between.

They saw far-off a little wood  
Stand up against the sky.  
Knee-deep in grass a great tree stood;  
Some lazy cows went by . . .  
There were some rooks sailed overhead,  
And once a church-bell pealed.  
“God! but it’s England,” someone said,  
“And there’s a cricket-field!”

W. J. TURNER

ENGLAND, 1889—

TURNER's verses of delicate fancy appear in two volumes,  
*The Hunter* and *The Dark Wind*.

*Romance*

WHEN I was but thirteen or so  
I went into a golden land:  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,  
They passed like fleeting dreams:  
I stood where Popocatapetl  
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the master's voice  
And boys far-off at play:  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream  
To and fro from school:  
Shining Popocatapetl  
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy  
And never a word I'd say:  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
Had taken my speech away.

W. J. TURNER

I gazed entranced upon his face  
Fairer than any flower—  
O shining Popocatapetl  
It was thy magic hour:

The houses, people, traffic seemed  
Thin fading dreams by day.  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi,  
They had stolen my soul away!

## PATRICK MacGILL

IRELAND, 1890—

MACGILL for years was, like William H. Davies, a tramp and a man-of-all-work. He rose at last to the authorial level, and wrote *The Rat Pit*, a novel, and *Songs of the Dead End*, both expressive of his revolt against the horrors of modern industrialism. His *Soldier Songs* voices his experiences in the World War.

### *By-the-Way*

THESE be the little verses, rough and uncultured,  
which  
I've written in hut and model, deep in the dirty ditch,  
On the upturned hod by the palace made for the idle  
rich.

Out on the happy highway, or lines where the engines go,  
Which fact you may hardly credit, still for your doubts  
'tis so;  
For I am the person who wrote them, and surely to  
God, I know!

Wrote them beside the hot-plate, or under the chilling  
skies,  
Some of them true as death is, some of them merely lies,  
Some of them very foolish, some of them otherwise.

PATRICK MACGILL

Little sorrows and hopings, little and rugged rhymes,  
Some of them maybe distasteful to the moral men of  
our times,  
Some of them marked against me in the Book of the  
Many Crimes.

These, the Songs of a Navvy, bearing the taint of the  
brute,  
Unasked, uncouth, unworthy out to the world I put,  
Stamped with the brand of labor, the heel of a navvy's  
boot.

## FRANCIS LEDWIDGE

IRELAND, 1891—1917

LEDWIDGE was killed in Flanders, leaving two books of poems and material for a third. Lord Dunsany, the sponsor of this young poet, has prefaced each of these three volumes. The fancies in the early poetry of Ledwidge rise into imagination in his later work. John Drinkwater says: "To those who know poetry, the death of this young poet was nothing but calamity. . . . He was cultivating his glowing lyrical gifts with tranquil deliberation to an exquisite end."

### *An Evening in England*

FROM its blue vase the rose of evening drops;  
Upon the streams its petals float away.  
The hills all blue with distance hide their tops  
In the dim silence falling on the grey.  
A little wind said "Hush!" and shook a spray  
Heavy with May's white crop of opening bloom;  
A silent bat went dipping in the gloom.

Night tells her rosary of stars full soon,  
They drop from out her dark hand to her knees.  
Upon a silhouette of woods, the moon  
Leans on one horn as if beseeching ease  
From all her changes which have stirred the seas.  
Across the ears of Toil, Rest throws her veil.  
I and a marsh bird only, make a wail.

IRENE RUTHERFORD McLEOD

ENGLAND, 1891—

*Songs to Save a Soul* and *Before Dawn* are two important volumes by this poet. Among the choir of the younger English women poets of today, her voice has a distinguished note.

*Is Love, Then, So Simple?*

IS love, then, so simple my dear?  
The opening of a door,  
And seeing all things clear?  
I did not know before.

I had thought it unrest and desire  
Soaring only to fall,  
Annihilation and fire:  
It is not so at all.

I feel no desperate will,  
But I think I understand  
Many things, as I sit quite still,  
With Eternity in my hand.

*Lone Dog*

I'M a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone:  
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own:  
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep:  
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls from  
sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,  
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat—  
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,  
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff and kick, and  
hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side:  
Some have run a short while, but none of them would  
bide.

O mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,  
Wide wind, and wild stars, and hunger of the quest!

IRENE RUTHERFORD McLEOD

*So Beautiful You Are, Indeed*

**S**O beautiful you are, indeed  
That I am troubled when you come,  
And though I crave you for my need,  
Your nearness strikes me blind and dumb.

And when you bring your lips to mine  
My spirit trembles and escapes:  
And you and I are turned divine,  
Bereft of our familiar shapes.

And fearfully we tread cold space,  
Naked of flesh and winged with flame,  
Until we find us face to face,  
Each calling on the other's name!

*Rebel*

*You see of course that Irene McLeod packs a deal of wisdom into this poem. Note, for example, "Saints that wash their hands too clean." Verily, they become so "clean" that they refuse utterly to leave the slums of respectability and go down into the slums of poverty to help their perishing comrades, hard-pressed on the darker ground of the battle.*

**S**INCE I was a little child  
My spirit has been swift and wild,  
With pinions flapping hard on fate,  
And burnt and blown with love and hate!  
I've hated all that's mean and cold,  
All that's dusty, tame and old,  
Comfortable lies in books,  
Pallid Virtue's sidelong looks,  
Fear that gags the jaws of Truth,  
Doubt that weights the heels of Youth,  
Saints who wash their hands too clean,  
And walk where only Saints have been,  
And mobs that blabber "Crucify!"  
On him who fixes heaven too high:  
All of these I seek to blast,  
Love's hate shall drive me to the last.  
Beyond the murk that swallows me  
There is an Eye that follows me;  
There is an Ear that waits and strains  
To catch the echoes of my pains;  
There is a Hand outstretched to take  
Utmost toll for each mistake.  
These Three have stalked me down the years  
To mock the passion of my tears.

## IRENE RUTHERFORD McLEOD

I fling you scorn, unholy spy!  
Though living give my faith the lie,  
Though loving clip the wings of Love,  
Though men humanity disprove,  
Though all my suns and moons go out,  
Though tongues of all the ages shout  
That only death may not deceive—  
I'll not believe! I'll not believe!  
With ardor passionate in my breath  
I'll sing my undefeated faith!  
O take me, break me, peaceless life!  
My soul was born to welcome strife!  
O sap my heart of its deep blood,  
If blood be Beauty's precious food!  
There is no thing I would not give,  
There is no hour I dare not live,  
There is no hell I'd not explore  
To find a hidden heavenly door!  
O loveless spy, you wait in vain,  
There is no pity in my pain,  
If by my living I may prove  
Faith and beauty, truth and love!  
Twisted, shattered, drained and wrung,  
I shall have sung! I shall have sung!

RICHARD ALDINGTON  
ENGLAND, 1892—

**A**LDINGTON is married to Hilda Doolittle, the American poet known as "H. D."; and they are leaders in what is called the imagist movement. In his two volumes—*Images Old and New* and *War and Love*—we find Aldington at his best, and at his best he reaches a high level.

*Images*

I

**L**IKE a gondola of green scented fruits  
Drifting along the dark canals of Venice,  
You, O exquisite one,  
Have entered into my desolate city.

II

The blue smoke leaps  
Like swirling clouds of birds vanishing.  
So my love leaps forth toward you,  
Vanishes and is renewed.

III

A rose-yellow moon in a pale sky  
When the sunset is faint vermillion  
In the mist among the tree-boughs  
Art thou to me, my belovèd.

## RICHARD ALDINGTON

### IV

A young beech tree on the edge of the forest  
Stands still in the evening,  
Yet shudders through all its leaves in the light air  
And seems to fear the stars—  
So are you still and so tremble.

### V

The red deer are high on the mountain,  
They are beyond the last pine trees.  
And my desires have run with them.

### VI

The flower which the wind has shaken  
Is soon filled again with rain;  
So does my heart fill slowly with tears,  
O Foam-Driver, Wind-of-the-Vineyards,  
Until you return.

CECIL ROBERTS

ENGLAND, 1892—

*Eyeless and Limbless and Shattered*

FROM "CHARING CROSS"

AND here is the end of it all, and we count the loss  
Recording the glory, forgetting this human refuse  
Left by extravagant war—borne away in the night  
Swiftly and silently. God! here again at a cross  
Crucified man in a dark world dies; the sight  
Burns to the brain, and I cry, as once One cried—  
"My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?"—  
then  
I watch with dumb anguish the endless procession of  
men,  
The remnants picked up from the waste in the fields:  
they who died  
Flow no more in the stream, they can rest; and only it  
matters  
That Science should skilfully mend what it skilfully  
shatters.

## EDWARD SHANKS

ENGLAND, 1892—

**S**HANKS is a critic of poetry, and is one of the editors of *The London Mercury*. I take the following from *The Queen of China and Other Poems*.

### *The Fields Are Full*

THE fields are full of summer still  
And breathe again upon the air  
From brown dry side of hedge and hill  
More sweetness than the sense can bear.

So some old couple, who in youth  
With love were filled and overfull,  
And loved with strength and loved with truth,  
In heavy age are beautiful.

*Song*

**A**S I lay in the early sun,  
Stretched in the grass I thought upon  
My true love, my dear love,  
Who has my heart forever,  
Who is my happiness when we meet,  
My sorrow when we sever.  
She is all fire when I do burn,  
Gentle when I moody turn,  
Brave when I am sad and heavy  
And all laughter when I am merry.  
And so I lay and dreamed and dreamed,  
And so the day wheeled on;  
While all the birds with thoughts like mine  
Were singing to the sun.

## OSBERT SITWELL

ENGLAND, 1892—

SITWELL's poems, to be found chiefly in his *Argonaut* and *Juggernaut*, indicate a strong, unconventional character. Some of his lines blaze with a fiery energy.

### *The Blind Pedlar*

I STAND alone through each long day  
Upon these pavers; cannot see  
The wares spread out upon this tray—  
For God has taken sight from me!

Many a time I've cursed the night  
When I was born. My peering eyes  
Have sought for but one ray of light  
To pierce the darkness. When the skies

Rain down their first sweet April showers  
On budding branches—when the morn  
Is sweet with breath of spring and flowers,  
I've cursed the night when I was born.

But now I thank God, and am glad  
For what I cannot see this day—  
The young men cripples, old, and sad,  
With faces burnt and torn away;

Or those who, growing rich and old,  
Have battened on the slaughter,  
Whose faces, gorged with blood and gold,  
Are creased in purple laughter!

## ROBERT NICHOLS

ENGLAND, 1893—

THE poems of Nichols are gathered into *Ardours and Endurances* and *The Flower of Flame*. He was in the World War as a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery; and he bears his witness in the words, "War does not enoble: it degrades."

### *Fulfilment*

WAS there love once? I have forgotten her.  
Was there grief once? grief yet is mine.  
Other loves I have, men rough, but men who stir  
More grief, more joy, than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,  
Lined by the wind, burned by the sun;  
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,  
As whose children we are brethren: one.

And any moment may descend hot death  
To shatter limbs! pulp, tear, blast  
Beloved soldiers who love rough life and breath  
Not less for dying faithful to the last.

O the fading eyes, the grimed face turned bony,  
Oped mouth gushing, fallen head,  
Lessening pressure of a hand shrunk, clammed, and  
stony!  
O sudden spasm, release of the dead!

## ROBERT NICHOLS

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.  
Was there grief once? grief yet is mine.  
O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,  
All, all, my joy, my grief, my love, are thine!

### *The Assault*

THE beating of the guns grows louder.  
*"Not long, boys, now."*  
My heart burns whiter, fearfuller, prouder.  
Hurricanes grow  
As guns redouble their fire.  
Through the shaken periscope peeping,  
I glimpse their wire;  
Black earth, fountains of earth rise, leaping,  
Spouting like shocks of meeting waves.  
Death's fountains are playing.  
Shells like shrieking birds rush over;  
Crash and din rises higher.  
A stream of lead raves  
Over us from the left . . . (we safe under cover!)  
Crash! Reverberation! Crash!  
Acrid smoke billowing. Flash upon flash.  
Black smoke drifting. The German line  
Vanishes in confusion, smoke. Cries, and cry  
Of our men, *"Gah, yer swine!"*  
*Ye're for it,"* die  
In a hurricane of shell.

One cry:  
*"We're comin' soon! look out!"*  
There is opened hell  
Over there; fragments fly,

## ROBERT NICHOLS

Rifles and bits of men whirled at the sky—  
Dust, smoke, thunder! A sudden bout  
Of machine guns chattering . . .  
And a redoubled battering,  
As if in fury at their daring! . . .

No good staring.

Time soon now . . . home . . . house on a sunny  
hill. . . ,  
Gone like a flickered page:  
Time soon now. . . . zero<sup>1</sup> . . . will engage. . . .

A sudden thrill—  
“Fix bayonets!”  
Gods! we have our fill  
Of fear, hysteria, exultation, rage,  
Rage to kill.  
My heart burns hot, whiter and whiter,  
Contracts tighter and tighter,  
Until I stifle with the will  
Long forged, now used  
(Though utterly strained)  
O pounding heart,  
Baffled, confused,  
Heart panged, head singing, dizzily pained—  
To do my part.

Blindness a moment. Sick.  
There the men are!  
Bayonets ready: click!  
Time goes quick:  
A stumbled prayer. . . . somehow a blazing star

<sup>1</sup> “Zero” is the hour agreed upon by the Staff when the infantry are to go “over the top” and make the assault.

## ROBERT NICHOLS

In a blue night . . . where?

Again prayer.

The tongue trips. Start:

How's time? Soon now. Two minutes or less.

The gun's fury mounting higher. . . .

Their utmost. I lift a silent hand. Unseen I bless  
Those hearts will follow me.

And beautifully,

Now beautifully my will grips.

Soul calm and round and filmed and white!

A shout: "Men, no such order as retire."

I nod. The whistle's 'twixt my lips . . .

I catch

A wan, worn smile at me.

Dear men!

The pale wrist-watch. . . .

The quiet hand ticks on amid the din.

The guns again

Rise to a last fury, to a rage, a lust:

Kill! Pound! Kill! Pound! Pound!

Now comes the thrust!

My part . . . dizziness . . . will . . . but trust

These men. The great guns rise;

Their fury seems to burst the earth and skies!

They lift.<sup>1</sup>

Gather, heart, all thoughts that drift;

Be steel, soul,

Compress thyself

Into a round, bright whole.

<sup>1</sup> Guns are said to "lift" when, after pounding the front line of the enemy, they lengthen their range and set up a barrier of fire behind his front line to prevent supports moving up. The attacking infantry then advance.

# ROBERT NICHOLS

I cannot speak.

Time! Time!

I hear my whistle shriek,  
Between teeth set;  
I fling an arm up,  
Scramble up the grime  
Over the parapet!

I'm up. Go on.

Something meets us.

Head down into the storm that greets us.

A wail.

Lights. Blurr.

Gone.

On, on. Leâd. Leâd. Hail.

Spatter! Whirr! Whirr!

*"Toward that patch of brown;  
Direction left."* Bullets a stream  
Devouring thought crying in a dream.  
Men, crumpled, going down. . . .

Go on. Go.

Deafness. Numbness. The loudening tornado.

Bullets. Mud. Stumbling and skating.

My voice's strangled shout:

*"Steady pace, boys!"*

The still light: gladness.

*"Look, sir. Look out!"*

Ha! ha! Bunched figures waiting.

Revolver levelled quick!

Flick! Flick!

Red as blood.

Germans!

Good! O good!

Cool madness.

ROBERT GRAVES  
ENGLAND, 1895—

**G**RAVES was in the World War with his lyric comrades, Sassoon and Nichols; and, like them he refuses in his poems to glorify militarism, just as he refused to die on the battlefield. Picked up for dead, he is said to have astounded the stretcher-bearers by suddenly exclaiming: "I'm not dead! I'm damned if I'll die!" Graves has collected his spirited and volatile poems into two volumes, *Fairies and Fusiliers* and *Country Sentiment*.

*It's a Queer Time*

**I**T'S hard to know if you're alive or dead  
When steel and fire go roaring through your head.

One moment you'll be crouching at your gun  
Traversing, mowing heaps down half in fun:  
The next, you choke and clutch at your right breast—  
No time to think—leave all—and you go . . .  
To Treasure Island where the Spice winds blow,  
To lovely groves of mango, quince and lime—  
Breathe no good-bye, but ho, for the Red West!  
It's a queer time.

You're charging madly at them yelling "Fag!"  
When somehow something gives and your feet drag.  
You fall and strike your head; yet feel no pain  
And find . . . you're digging tunnels through the hay  
In the Big Barn, 'cause it's a rainy day.  
Oh, springy hay, and lovely beams to climb!

## ROBERT GRAVES

You're back in the old sailor suit again.  
It's a queer time.

Or you'll be dozing safe in your dug-out—  
A great roar—the trench shakes and falls about—  
You're struggling, gasping, struggling, then . . . *hullo!*  
Elsie comes tripping gaily down the trench,  
Hanky to nose—that lyddite makes a stench—  
Getting her pinafore all over grime.  
Funny! because she died ten years ago!  
It's a queer time.

The trouble is, things happen much too quick;  
Up jump the Boches, rifles thump and click,  
You stagger, and the whole scene fades away:  
Even good Christians don't like passing straight  
From Tipperary or their Hymn of Hate  
To Alleluiah-chanting, and the chime  
Of golden harps . . . and . . . I'm not well to-day . . .  
It's a queer time.

EDWARD DAVISON  
ENGLAND, 1898—

THIS young English poet has found a congenial residence in America, and is at present a member of the faculty at Vassar College. His *Harvest of Youth* contains the best of his lyrics.

*The Enchanted Heart*

HERE blew winter once with the snowstorms  
spurning  
Hill and furrow and field till all were whitened:  
Here it was the robin flew away frightened  
When I went by dreaming of spring returning.

Now that I walk on self-same meadow and hill  
Why seems winter the fairer, happier season,  
And spring the very root of the mind's unreason?  
Why do I ponder and roam unhappily still?

What do you lack to-day that you lacked not then,  
O brooding heart, that you cannot be contented?  
*Far away*, says the heart that was enchanted,  
*Long ago . . . in a dream. . . . O never again!*

*The Snare*

**F**AR away and long ago  
This trouble at my heart began:  
Ere Eden perished like a flower,  
Or Eve had shed her tears an hour,  
Or Adam knew himself a man,  
In every leaf of every tree  
Beauty had set a snare for me.

Far away and long ago  
Her loveliest song began to chime.  
Bright Hector fell, and at the stroke  
Ten thousand hearts like mine awoke  
In every age and every clime.  
She stood bestriding time and space  
Amid the stars, and lit the rose  
With scent and color, and she chose  
My country for a dwelling place,  
And set a snare in every tree  
Awaiting me, awaiting me!

## ANONYMOUS

### *Pioneers*

*This anonymous poem came recently from Australia.*

WE shall not travel by the road we make:  
Ere day by day the sound of many feet  
Is heard upon the stones that now we break,  
We shall be come to where the cross-roads meet.

For us the heat by day, the cold by night,  
The inch-slow progress, and the heavy load,  
And death at last to close the long grim fight  
With man and beast and stone; for them the Road.

For them the shade of trees that now we plant,  
The safe, smooth journey and the final goal,  
Yea, birthright in the land of covenant—  
For us day-labor, travail of the soul.

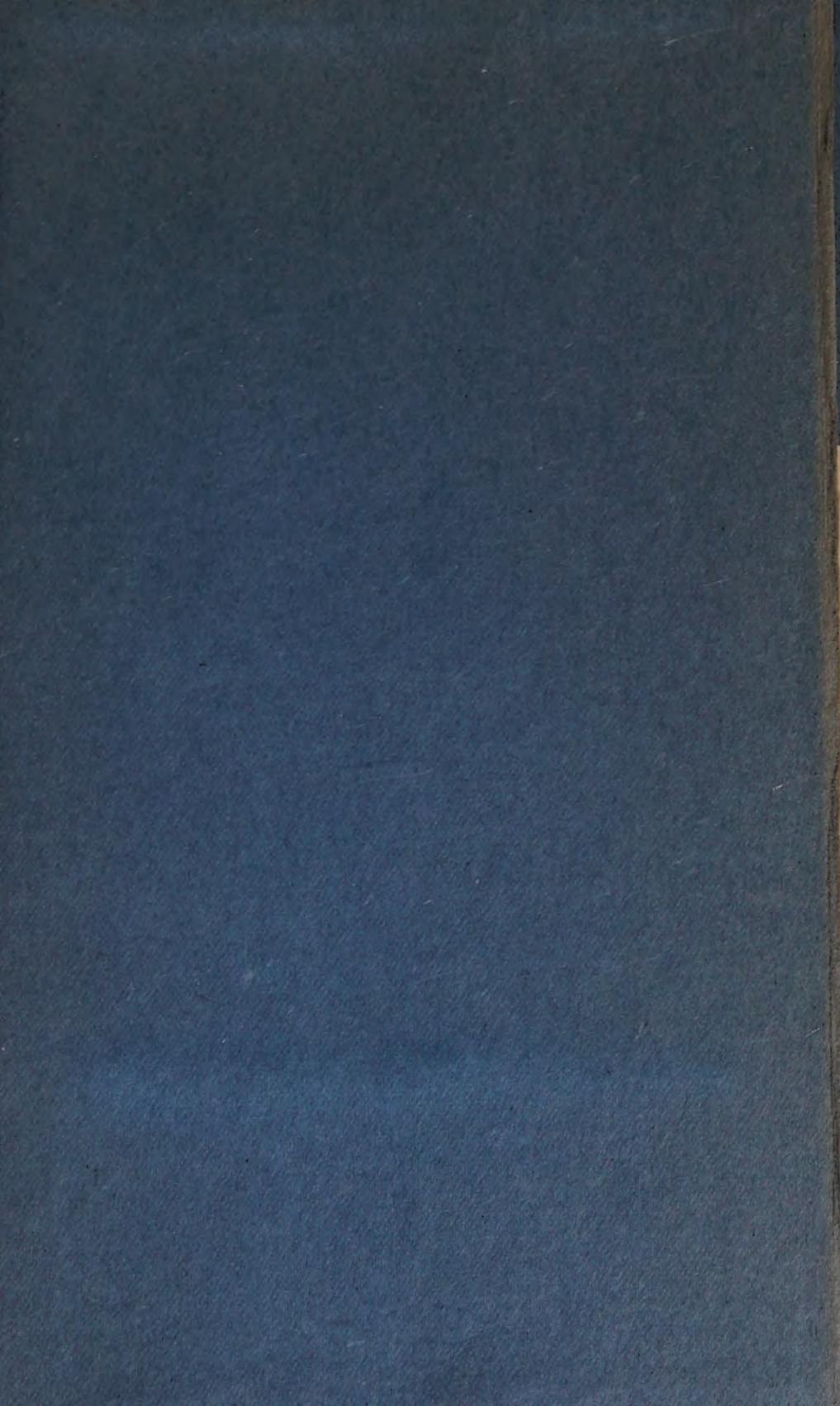
And yet the road is ours as never theirs!  
Is not one joy on us alone bestowed?  
For us the Master-Joy, O Pioneers—  
We shall not travel, but we make the Road.











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